Commentary

Volume Sixty-five, Number Two, February 1978

Vietnam: New Light on the Question of American Guilt

Guenter Lewy

THE WORLD & PRESIDENT CARTER
Walter Laqueur

PAUL GOODMAN IN RETROSPECT
Joseph Epstein

POST-MORTEM — A STORY
Naomi Shepherd

FRANCE'S "NEW PHILOSOPHERS"
Roger Kaplan

THE ZEPPELIN — A MEMOIR
Chaim Raphael

BOOKS IN REVIEW
Marion Magid
Jack Beatty
Joshua Rubenstein
Arch Puddington
Jeffrey Marsh

Published by the American Jewish Committee / Two Dollars

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

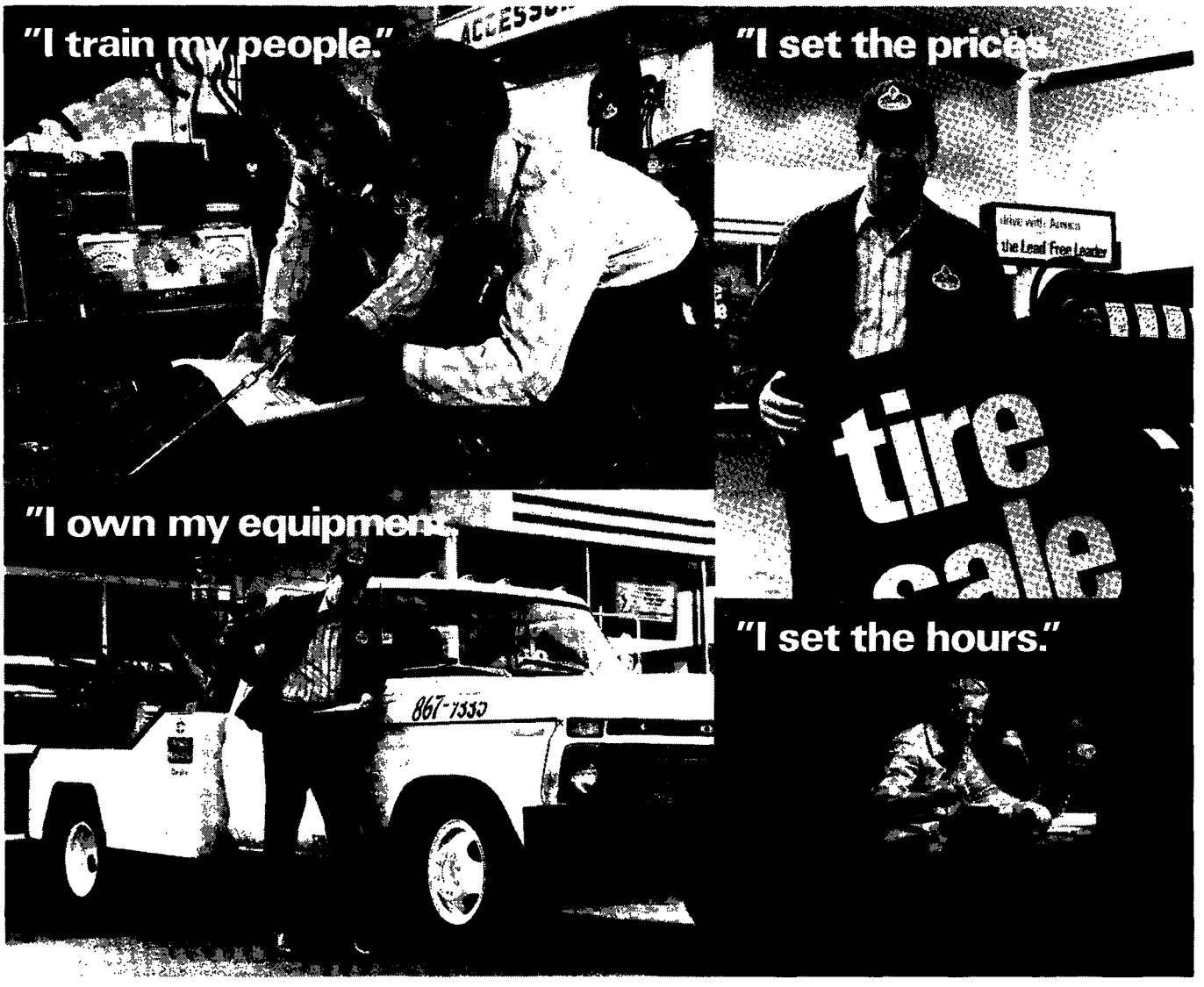
Born in Israel

The essence of fine Jaffa oranges with just a hint of fine chocolate.

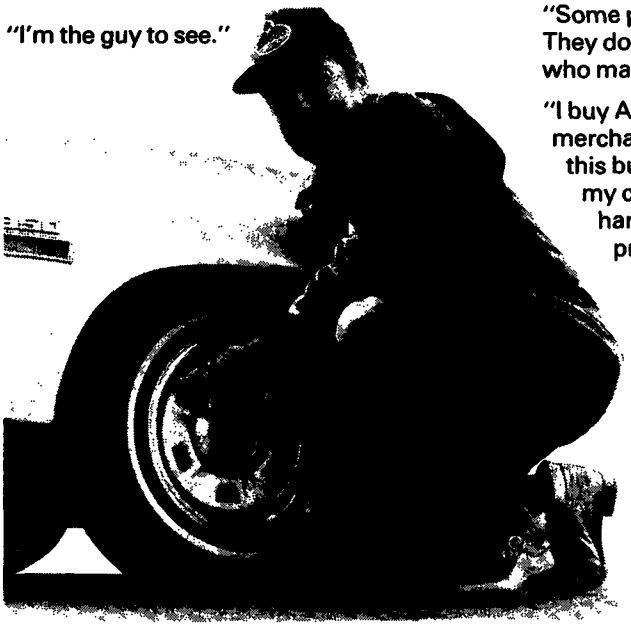
Sabra Liqueur

375 PARK AVENUE, N.Y.C. 52 PROOF

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



This is my station. Keeping you happy keeps me in business.



"Some people may think Amoco Oil Company runs this station. They don't. I do. I'm one of 25,000 independent retail businessmen who market Amoco® products.

"I buy Amoco petroleum products and Atlas* Tire, Battery, and Accessory merchandise from them. But, when it comes to important decisions about this business, I make them. And I make them for the benefit of you, my customer. I depend on you to stay in business. That's why I work as hard and as smart as I can, to keep you coming back. I try to keep my prices for gasoline, tires and everything else I sell, competitive.

"I hire the best help I can. I set my hours, so they're convenient for you, not for me. And I see to it you get all the benefits you expect from Amoco. As an independent businessman, I'm going to run my Amoco station right. Because I know, keeping you happy keeps me in business."

AMOCO

Amoco Oil Company

You expect more from a leader.

*Reg. Trademark, Atlas Supply Company

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

VOLUME 65 NUMBER 2 *FEBRUARY 1978*

Articles 29 Vietnam: New Light on the Question of American Guilt *Guenter Lewy*

56 The World & President Carter *Walter Laqueur*

64 The Zeppelin—A Memoir *Chaim Raphael*

Story 50 Post-Mortem *Naomi Shepherd*

Observations 70 Paul Goodman in Retrospect *Joseph Epstein*

73 France's "New Philosophers" *Roger Kaplan*

Letters 6 from *Raoul Berger, Elliott Abrams, Oscar Gass, Martin Peretz, Albert L. Weeks, Walter C. Uhler, Edward N. Luttwak, Arnold Beichman, Eugene J. McCarthy, Elias M. Schwarzbart, Michael Ledeen, Paul Harris Forman, Samuel Lipman, William J. Bennett, Irving Louis Horowitz, Kevin V. Mulcahy, Daphne Merkin,* and others

Books in Review 78 The Romance of American Communism, by Vivian Gornick *Marion Magid*

81 The Rise of American Philosophy, by Bruce Kuklick *Jack Beatty*

83 Farewell, Israel!, by Ephraim Sevela *Joshua Rubenstein*

84 Black Workers in White Unions, by William B. Gould *Arch Puddington*

86 The Economic War Against the Jews, by Walter Henry Nelson and Terence Prittie *Jeffrey Marsh*

Editor: Norman Podhoretz
Executive Editor: Neal Kozodoy
Managing Editor: Marion Magid
Associate Editor: Brenda Brown
Contributing Editors: Robert Alter, Milton Himmelfarb, Walter Laqueur
Comptroller: Philip Shamis
Production Manager: Bruce Lodi
Circulation Manager: Helene Hansen
Cover: The Drawing Board, Inc.

COMMENTARY is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—Single copy is $2.00, $20 a year; 3 years $54; 5 years $80—Add $4.00 per year for all foreign, including Canada and Latin America—Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

Copyright © 1978 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions—

Indexed in *Readers' Guide, Book Review Digest, Public Affairs Information Service, Index to Jewish Periodicals, ABC Pol Sci, Historical Abstracts,* and *America: History and Life*—Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

EDITORIAL & BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 E. 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOBODY HATES A WELL MADE CAR.

A recent survey shows there's something the average new car owner doesn't like about his car. And it's one of the things the average new Volvo owner likes most about his.*

Namely, the way his car was put together.

Volvo owners can appreciate things like a paint job that's four coats deep. Two separate undercoatings. And a body whose inside sections are protected with rust-proofing compounds.

Volvo has inner strengths, too.

Like a strong, unitized body that helps eliminate squeaks and rattles.

Overhead cam engines which are individually hand-assembled and bench-tested.

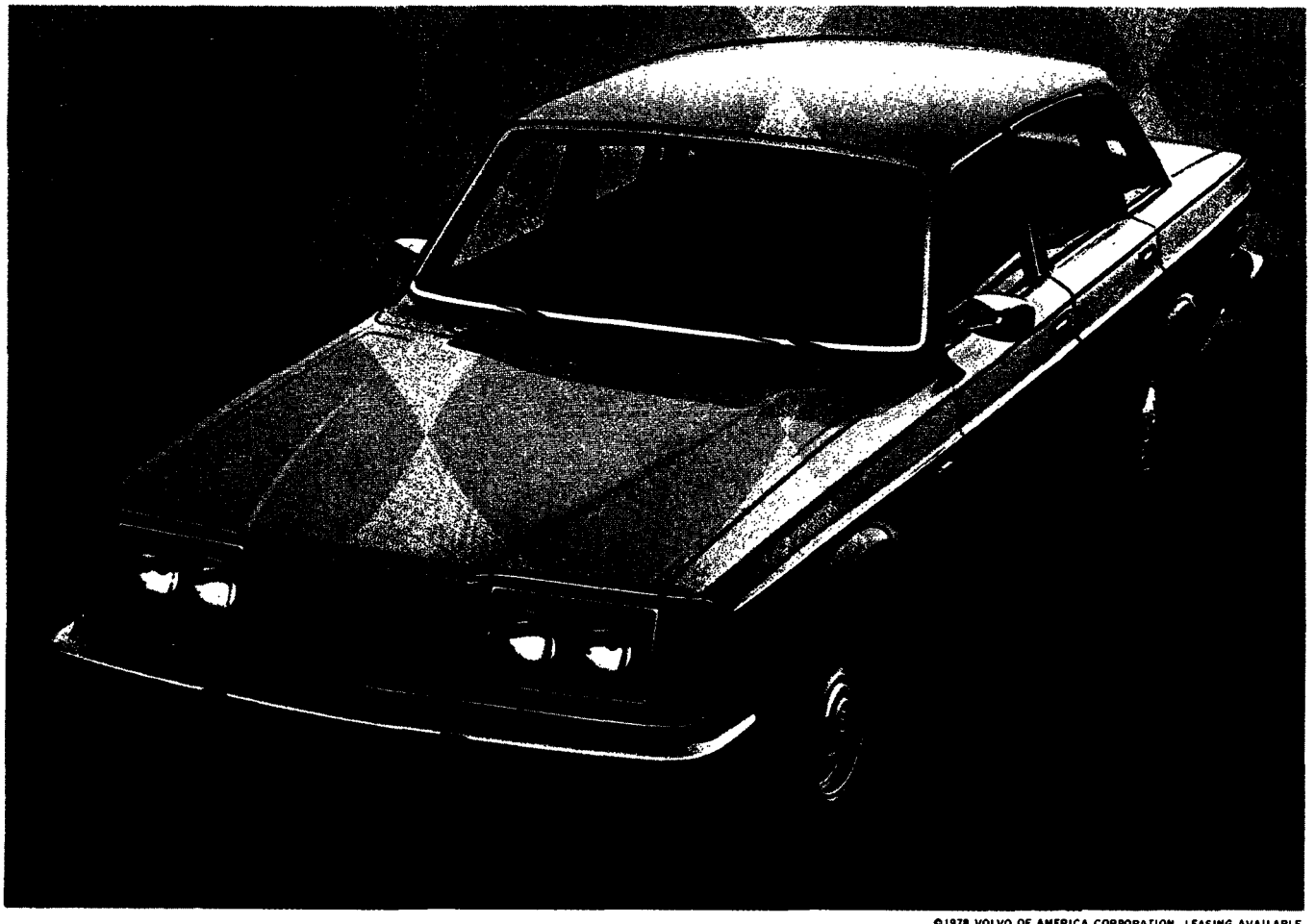
The fact is, Volvos are so well built that in the past ten years their average life expectancy in Sweden has increased by 37%. (Latest projections show that in Sweden the average Volvo will live to the ripe old age of 16 years.)

You may not keep your Volvo that long, but while you do you'll be able to appreciate the things that make such long life possible.

You'll also be able to understand why new Volvo owners are happier than the owners of 48 cars from G.M., Ford, Chrysler and AMC.

At a time when most Americans are fed up with the quality of new cars, we ask you: why buy a car there's a good chance you'll hate, when you can buy a car there's an even better chance you'll love?

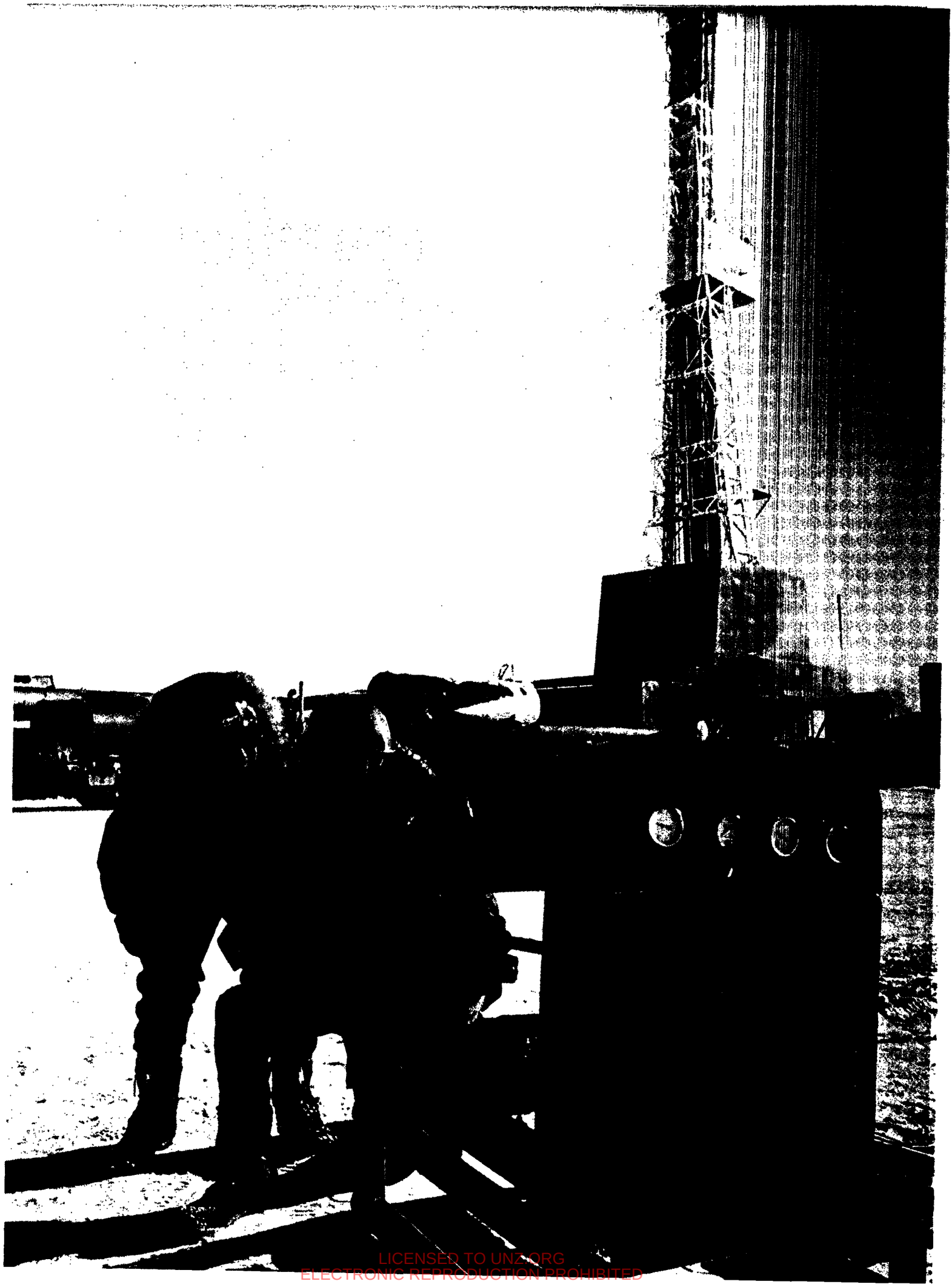
**Survey conducted among owners of new cars bought in May, 1977.*



©1978 VOLVO OF AMERICA CORPORATION. LEASING AVAILABLE.

VOLVO. A CAR YOU CAN BELIEVE IN.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"It's 52° below zero up here, but, crazy as it sounds, we need this machine to keep the ground frozen."

"When you drill for gas north of the Arctic Circle, the way we're doing here at Canada's Mackenzie Delta, you expect a lot of problems," says Bob Toole, drilling superintendent for Gulf.

"But this one's a real fooler. It's a freezing unit. Even at 52° below zero, we need it to keep the ground around the wellhead frozen.

Hot mud

"The problem is that when the drilling mud comes up from the bottom of the hole, maybe a mile down, it's hot enough to melt the permafrost that's holding up the whole rig.

"If the permafrost melted, the hole would get bigger and bigger, and the operation would have to come to a halt.

Frozen pipes

"Our freezer keeps the top thirty feet of the casing around the drill pipe at temperatures below freezing, so that doesn't happen.

"This country is probably one of the toughest spots on earth to drill for natural gas. But we're drilling the wells. We're meeting the challenge."

Gulf

Gulf people: meeting the challenge.

"At temperatures as low as this, you have to invent new ways to do almost everything."

Left to right: Bob Toole, roustabout Jacob Kuhoktak, and the freezer.

Gulf Oil Corporation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. Its pages will be hospitable to diverse points of view and belief, and it hopes to encourage original creative endeavor in the various fields of culture. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE

Richard Maass, *President*

The Commentary Publication Committee

Edward E. Elson, *Chairman*

Norman Alexander
Donald M. Blinken
Charles D. Breitel
Theodore Ellenoff
Richard C. Ernst
Maurice Glinert
Robert H. Haines
Lewis J. Laventhol
Bess Myerson
Ned Pines
Frederick P. Rose
David Sher
John Slawson
Harry Steiner
Alan M. Stroock*
Laurence A. Tisch
Ben Touster
Gerard Weinstock

**Honorary Member*

Letters from Readers

Court & Constitution

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to reply to Elliott Abrams's review of my book, *Government by Judiciary: The Transformation of the Fourteenth Amendment* [Books in Review, December 1977].

"The most immediate constitutional crisis of our present time," wrote Professor Philip Kurland, is "the usurpation by the judiciary of general governmental powers on the pretext that its authority derives from the Fourteenth Amendment." Almost fifty years earlier, Justice Holmes expressed the "more than anxiety" he felt because

> As the decisions now stand, I see hardly any limit but the sky to the invalidation of [the constitutional rights of the states] if they happen to strike a majority of this Court for any reason as undesirable. I cannot believe that the amendment was intended to give us *carte blanche* to embody our economic or moral beliefs in its prohibitions.

Time and again Justice Black inveighed against the Court's unconstitutional exercise of the amending power. And after an "overpowering" demonstration that suffrage was excluded from the amendment, Justice Harlan declared with respect to the Warren Court's "one man-one vote" rule that "when the Court disregards the express intent and understanding of the framers, it has invaded the realm of the political process to which the amending power was committed."

My book assembled the evidence that undergirds such views, and demonstrated that the Court has exercised a revisory power that was withheld. In his review, Mr. Abrams ignores such testimony, and even weightier historical evidence, preferring to rely on generalities uttered by commentators.

In defense of the Court's exercise of the amending power, Mr. Abrams invokes Ralph Winter:

> A written constitution with difficult amendment procedures strongly encourages the body politic to add to the document only general declarations . . . leaving room for growth and change in the light of history.

Since the Constitution does not "grow" like a rubber plant, this obliquely suggests that the framers provided for judicial change as a substitute for the amendment process. Nothing, as my study demonstrated, was further from the minds of the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment than a blank check to the Court, which they distrusted. They did not intend by the "general" words "equal protection" to authorize, for example, judicial revision of their exclusion of suffrage from federal control. It took the Fifteenth Amendment to check denial of suffrage on racial grounds.

As regards the Founders, Elbridge Gerry declared: "The people have [directed] a particular mode of making amendments which we are not at liberty to depart from." In Hamilton's great defense of judicial review, he affirmed that the Constitution is binding

> until the *people* have, by some solemn and authoritative act, annulled or changed the established form . . . and no presumption, or even knowledge of their sentiments, can warrant their representatives in a departure from it, prior to such an act.

Chief Justice Marshall stated that the judicial power "cannot be the assertion of a right to change that instrument," e.g., to take over control of suffrage that was designedly left to the states

In truth, a "written Constitution" was employed precisely in order to limit the exercise of delegated power. The Founders were committed to a "fixed Constitution" and were fearful lest their delegates "overleap its bounds." History confirms Justice Black's statement that the struggle for a written constitution was "to make certain that men in power would be governed by *law*," not by the "law of judges." He dismissed the idea that "the Constitution must be changed from time to time and that this Court is charged with the duty to make those changes. . . . The Constitution makers knew the need for change and provided for it."

Mr. Abrams sets up a straw man when he says: "If the document should come to be amended frequently, if it should become little more binding than mere statutes, how strong a bulwark would it remain?" Yet the very requirement

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How Vilho Vatanen, the Finn, created the world's first sauna when he locked his wife in the smokehouse, set it on fire, beat her soundly with birch leaves, and discovered she loved it.

Let us tell you about the most hedonistic experience in all Europe: the Finnish sauna. There you are, making friends in this hot pine room, wrapped in a thick, fluffy, thirsty towel.

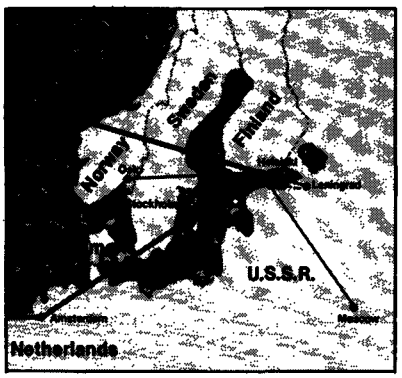
There is a distinct aura of amiability in the room; after all, you're all in this together. At times a cup of water is splashed on red-hot rocks. The sudden hissing and steaming arouses a delicious sense of drama and a gratifying sweat.

Tingling all over you are led from the sauna, scrubbed down, and tucked between crisp sheets for a snug post-sauna nap.

To understand how the sauna originated in Finland, and all the other tactile, fun pursuits the Finns pursue, one must consider her climate.

The Finnish summer is a glory to behold and to play through. The benign Gulf Stream warms her coastal towns, villages, and islands, leaving the country as balmy as Big Sur in August.

The mid-summer sun shines nineteen hours a day to give you more time to sail, to hike, to camp, to explore: to dance in the sunlight at 3am, or golf, or slip away with your sweetheart and pick lingonberries or cloudberries.

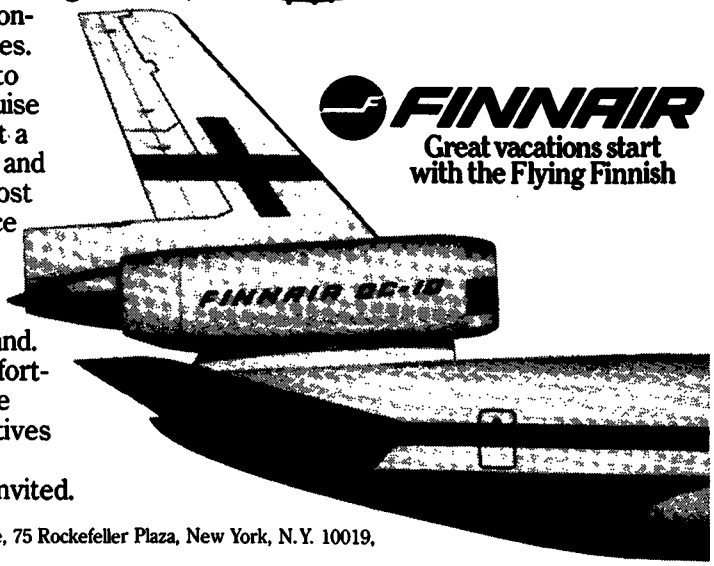


You can cruise to Stockholm. Even cruise to Leningrad without a visa. These capitals, and many more, are almost within hailing distance of Helsinki.

Jet Finnair, the only airline with direct flights to Finland.

Hotels are comfortable and plentiful, the food and drink sublime. And the friendliness of the natives unsurpassed anywhere in Europe.

Summer here is like one long party. And you're invited.



FINNAIR
Great vacations start with the Flying Finnish

For further information contact your travel agent, Finland National Tourist Office, 75 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, N.Y. 10019, or write: Finnair, 580 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10036

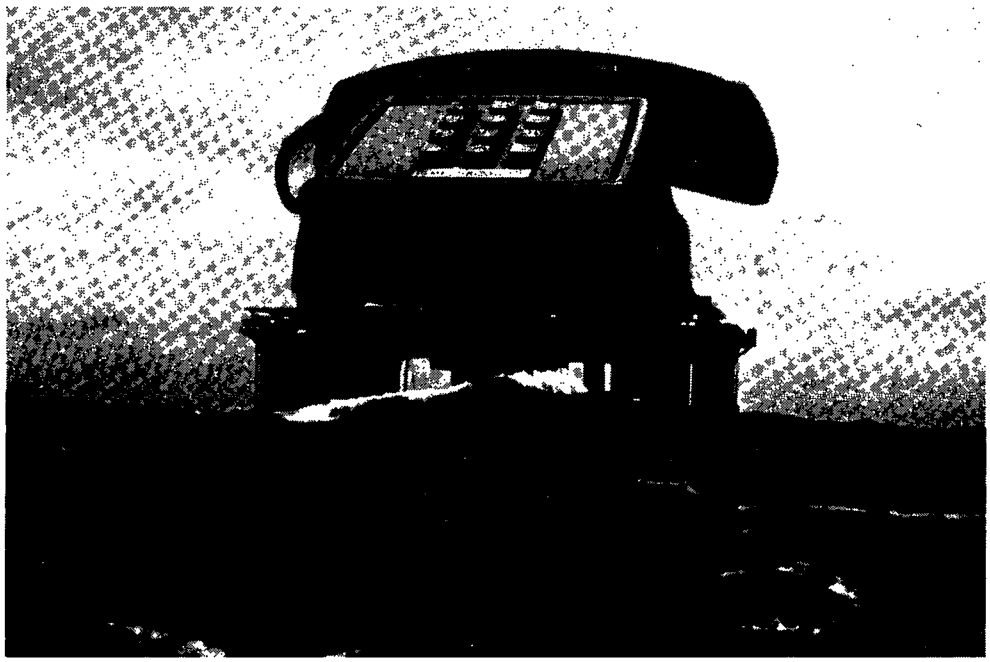
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A report on a matter of public interest:

How the Bell System is pumping more service out of less oil.

In 1973, when the OPEC oil embargo went into effect, the Bell System committed itself to reducing its energy consumption. That commitment has been fulfilled. In four years, the Bell System has saved the energy equivalent of almost 24 million barrels of oil and over 415 million dollars in energy costs—savings that help hold down the cost of your telephone bills.

Today, the Bell System is actually using 11 per cent less energy than it did in 1973, even though the number of telephones in service has risen over 16 per cent and the volume of business has increased 33 per cent.



Here's how we are combining common sense with uncommon technology in four basic areas to achieve Zero Energy Growth.

Telephones are reconditioned three times.

The Bell System's energy needs begin with the power and fuel necessary to design and manufacture the basic communications components—cables, wire and equipment such as your home telephone.

In general, it takes much more energy to manufacture such items from scratch than it does to recycle them. Because Bell System equipment is designed by Bell Labs to be reliable, repairable *and* recyclable, extensive energy cutbacks have been realized through 40 years of recycling and reuse. New, more energy-efficient processes are constantly being devised by Western Electric, some of which entail modifying original designs for even greater materials and power savings.

Since 1974, the Bell conservation program has saved the energy equivalent of over three million barrels of oil by recycling metals. Also, more than six million equivalent barrels of oil have been saved through the reuse of equipment. The average telephone, for example, is reconditioned three times before it is unrepairable or obsolete.

New technology does more with less.

Another area in which the Bell System is effecting energy savings is in power for switching and transmission equipment. Constantly, new energy-saving technology is being added to the system. *Item:* Over two billion power-saving transistors, diodes and integrated circuits have been put into use. *Item:* Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs) are replacing incandescent bulbs in switchboards and telephones, saving over 90 per cent of the previously required power. *Item:* A new

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

microprocessor called MAC-8 is less than one-tenth the size of a postage stamp yet contains the equivalent of over 7,000 transistors. The MAC-8 can execute several hundred electronic "thinking" functions, yet it will operate on only one-tenth of a watt of power.

Smaller vehicles power giant fleet.

Twenty-two per cent of Bell's energy requirements are in fuel for its fleet of over 170,000 vehicles, the largest privately owned and operated motor fleet in the world. Here, a number of commonsense procedures have been adopted: engines are carefully tuned for peak efficiency, smaller and more fuel-efficient vehicles are being used, and shuttle services have been set up between some company locations. In addition, New York Telephone Company is experimenting with nonpolluting, energy-saving electric-powered trucks. Due to these and other efforts, the Bell System in 1976 used over five per cent less motor fuel than in 1973.

Even employees' body heat is used.

Heating, lighting and air conditioning of Bell System's 25,000 buildings account for 45 per cent of its energy needs. Broad economies have been achieved simply by removing thousands of unnecessary lights; by lowering temperature settings; by cutting back on hot water temperatures; and by heating or cooling unoccupied areas only to the extent required for equipment operations.

Moving beyond the obvious conservation measures, the Bell System created a building energy management program to redesign and retrofit existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency. Two examples of other power-saving programs at Bell facilities:

• On windy Block Island, Rhode Island, the New England Telephone Company began operating a wind dynamo in September, 1976. It can produce up to 15 kilowatts of electricity to power a central office and microwave radio terminal. Excess power from the windmill is fed back to the power company.

• In AT&T's new Basking Ridge, New Jersey, facility, an innovative computerized system heats about 1½ million feet of office space by recovering excess heat from the building environment—lights, equipment and the body heat of employees. It is estimated that the system uses 25 per cent less energy than conventional heating/cooling systems.

Bell trials of solar heating and cooling are providing valuable data which should lead to more widespread use of alternate energy systems.

Windmill helps power central phone office and microwave radio terminal (tower at right) on Block Island.

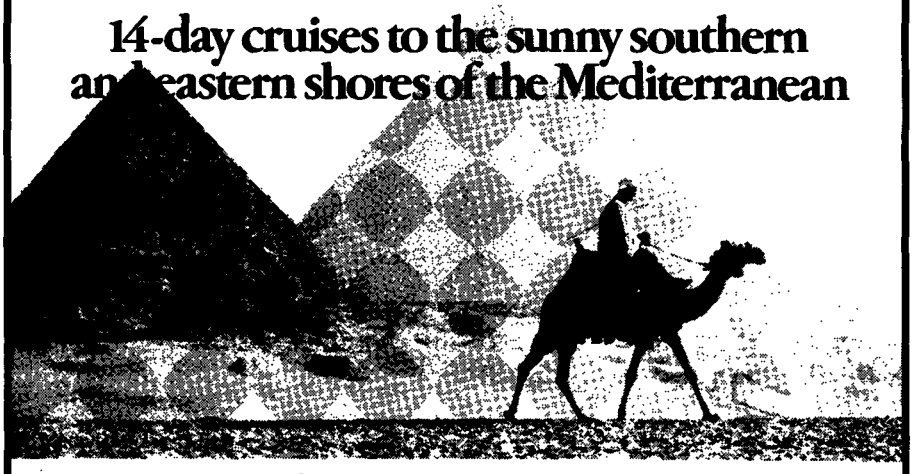
Today, throughout the Bell System, our commitment to energy conservation is more than a goal; it is an ongoing reality. And in looking to the future, we anticipate that in 1982 we will still be using no more energy than was used in 1973. *Keeping your phone system the best in the world.*

Bell System

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Pyramids, Pillars & Palms

14-day cruises to the sunny southern and eastern shores of the Mediterranean

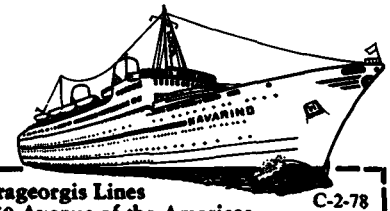


Karageorgis introduces four unique 14-day spring cruises starting March 18 plus two fall cruises starting October 28 from France or Italy to the most exotic ports in Italy, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel and Greece—all in the luxury of the Navarino, formerly the Gripsholm. There's nothing else quite like it.

You'll set out like the ancient seafarers from Villefranche or Genoa to discover the greatest achievements of the Mediterranean civilizations, from the palm-fringed, mysterious shores of North Africa and the spectacle of Egypt's pyramids to the holy city of Jerusalem and the glories of ancient Greece. All together, you experience five countries in addition to the country of departure, with seven fascinating ports. You experience all this in the luxury of the 23,000 ton floating palace, the Navarino, with all first-class outside cabins with private facilities, and the finest food the world has to offer, including special Kosher meals if desired. Rates start at $960, and we guarantee our published prices.

See an expert—your travel agent—or send us the coupon below. We'll send you our exciting and colorful 34-page brochure that will tell you more about the beauty, romance and adventure of this cruise and other fascinating Karageorgis cruises.

Special PASSOVER Cruise
April 15 to April 29
Have the most enjoyable and memorable Passover evening of your life, sailing, appropriately, from Egypt to Israel.



Karageorgis Lines
1350 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10019

C-2-78

Yes, I would like more information about your unique Pyramids, Pillars and Palms Cruises, as well as about the other exciting Karageorgis Cruises. Please send me your 34-page full-color brochure.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____ Zip_____

Karageorgis Cruises

Greek Registry

Classical cruises in classic style.

of submission by two-thirds of the Congress and ratification by three-quarters of the states disposes of this argument, for it has kept the number of amendments in check for almost two hundred years. It is the Court, rather, that has made frequent amendments, without disclosing that it is doing so, as is revealed by its rebuff of Justice Jackson's plea in the desegregation case that the Court tell the people that it "is declaring new law for a new day." Amendments by the people, no matter how numerous, are at least constitutional. Whereas the undisclosed judicial amendments are not.

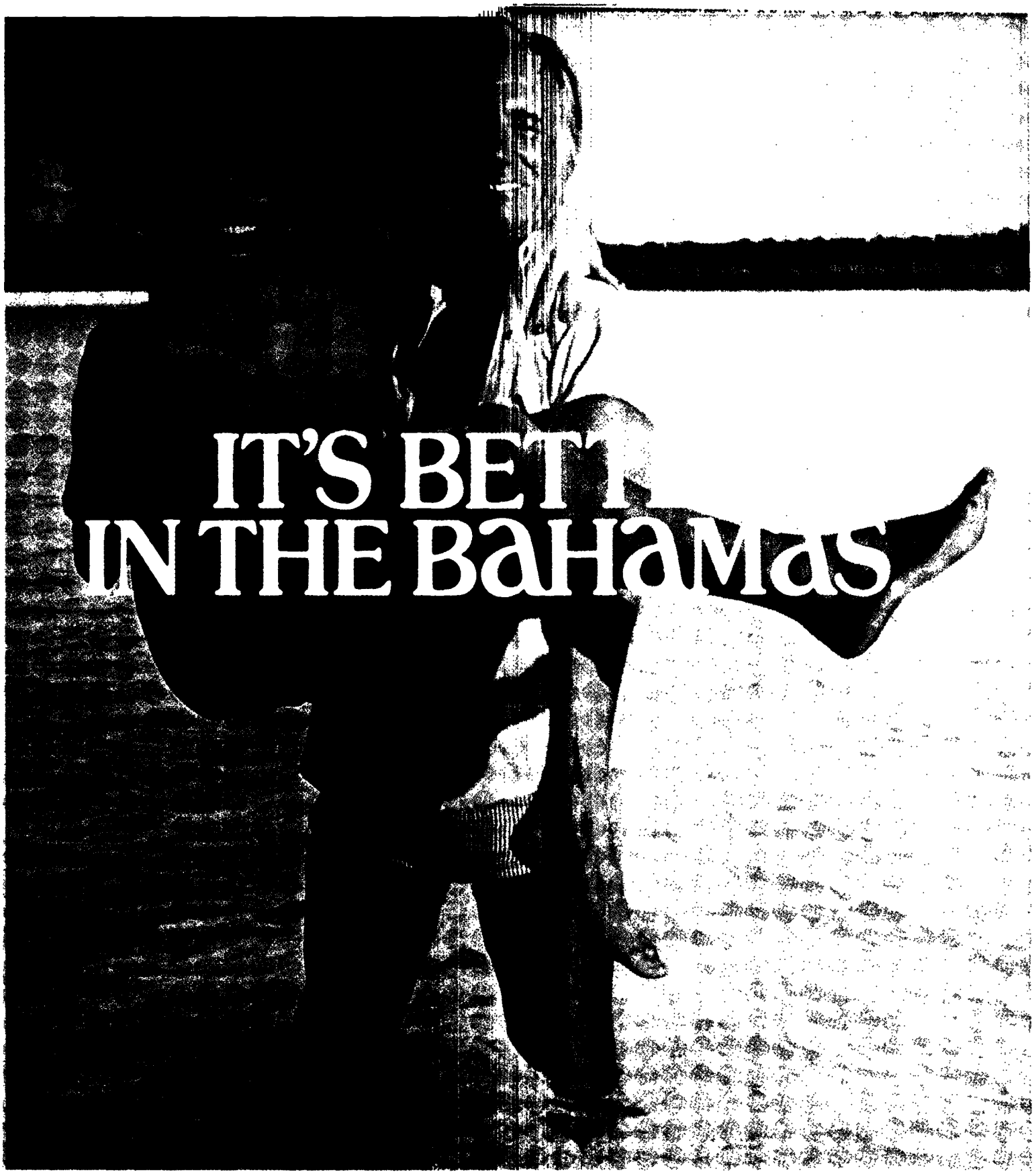
Mr. Abrams next appeals to Alexander M. Bickel's rejection of the view that "the Constitution is thought to embody a clear and certain yardstick." The framers' exclusion of suffrage from the Fourteenth Amendment is "clear" enough; but Bickel instanced "due process of law," which, to be sure, has become "conveniently vague" through judicial manipulation. But for Hamilton the phrase was crystal clear:

> The words "due process" have a precise technical import, and are only applicable to the process and proceedings of the courts of justice; they can never be referred to an act of the legislature.

No statement to the contrary will be found in any of the constitutional conventions, in the first Congress which first employed the phrase, or in the 1866 debates of the framers of the Fourteenth Amendment. Mr. Abrams himself testifies to the Court's misapplication of "due process," originally limited to *judicial procedure*, for the purpose of stifling economic *legislation*, e.g., when it "struck down even wages-and-hours laws," a practice now acknowledged by the Court to be discredited.

To refer to Jefferson's reminder that "jealousy" of power "prescribes limited constitutions to bind down those whom we are obliged to trust with power," to bind them "down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution," is in Mr. Abrams's opinion to view the Constitution "rather like a prison." But the Founders had a deep-seated fear of power, of its greedy appetite for expansion, and sought to "fence" it about. Mr. Abrams would strike those bonds by giving the Court a blank check to rewrite the Consti-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



There are places where you can feel more alive than anywhere else in the world.

Where you can spend days alone together on your own pure white sand beach. And spend your nights eating in gourmet restaurants and dancing to native entertainment.

Where you can water-ski, fish for the really big ones or just play around in a beautiful, crystal-clear turquoise sea.

Where you can go shopping for exotic crafts in the native straw markets.

And where the people are as warm as the sunshine.

The places are Nassau/Paradise Island, Freeport/Lucaya and the easygoing Out Islands of The Bahamas.

Come and see how beautiful a vacation can be. For reservations or our colorful, informative tour brochure, see your Travel Agent. Or call us toll free at 800-327-0787. In Florida call 800-432-5594. In Dade County 443-3821.

It's all in The Bahamas. And it's better in The Bahamas.

BAHAMAS

Nassau/Paradise Island Freeport/Lucaya The Out Islands

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ONCE IN A GREAT WHILE an artist appears whose work is not only beautiful and utterly original, but whose vision seems uniquely suited to the taste of a particular audience of art lovers. Just such a happy conjunction has occurred in the case of the young American artist David Bennett, from whom the editors of COMMENTARY have commissioned this strikingly brilliant original print. Two hundred impressions have been made. One of them has been presented to the Jewish Museum in New York, where it now forms a part of the permanent collection. The plates have been destroyed, and no more impressions will ever be executed.

THE WORK The venerable patriarch Jacob is captured at the moment of bestowing his precious gift, the coat of many colors, on the child of old age whom he loved, as the Bible says, "more than any other of his sons." At the center, Joseph the dreamer looms monumentally as his older brothers look on in distress and envy and his father wraps the legendary robe around him.

THE TECHNIQUE In this linoleum cut, the artist has utilized a highly decorative style with simplified forms expressed in bright, flat colors. Never has the coat of many colors appeared so rainbow-like or breathtakingly vivid. By limiting himself to the three primary colors of red, blue, and yellow, juxtaposing and surprinting to explore their potential for richness and contrast, the artist has achieved a technical tour-de-force in which surface brilliance and depth of feeling combine to produce a work of sinuous beauty.

THE ARTIST David Bennett is a rare phenomenon. He is an American whose initial recognition has been earned abroad, and whose acclaim has turned largely on his sensitive and profound handling of religious subjects. Since his first one-man exhibition at the Galerie Delfs in Munich in 1974, his work has been seen and repeatedly applauded throughout Western Europe. A typical European review extols the jewel-like effect of his work; another compares him to Chagall "in his ability to free biblical representations from crusty traditions and present them anew." Bennett's first American one-man exhibition will open next fall at the Maurice Spertus Museum in Chicago, and will travel from there to the Judah L. Magnes Museum in San Francisco, the Skirball Museum in Los Angeles, and the Jewish Museum in New York, among others.

THE EDITION A limited edition of two hundred impressions of *Joseph's Coat of Many Colors* has been executed in Europe by the firm of George Andor, and these, signed and numbered by the artist, have been handsomely framed in New York City at the Gallery of Graphic Arts. The 17"x20½" printed image has been matted to 25"x30". In a gold-toned metal frame, with all-rag white mat, *Joseph's Coat of Many Colors* is a work of enduring artistic value.

COMMENTARY • 165 EAST 56th STREET • NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022

Please enter my order for an individually signed, numbered, and framed impression of *Joseph's Coat of Many Colors* at $150, including shipping and insurance. I understand that there is a limit of one per person, and that, should the edition be sold out before my order arrives, I will be notified immediately and my payment will be returned. If not satisfied with my purchase I may send it back in good condition, well packed, and insured within ten days of receipt for full refund.

I prefer to pay as follows:

☐ By credit card (with bill issued after shipment). My order will be charged to:
☐ Master Charge* ☐ American Express
Account number _____
Expiration date _____
Signature _____
*If using Master Charge, indicate the four numbers above your name here _____

☐ I enclose my check for $150

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____

Please allow 6 to 8 weeks for delivery

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Joseph's Coat of Many Colors by David Bennett

TWO HUNDRED IMPRESSIONS of this brilliant original print have been commissioned by the editors of Commentary and issued in a single, serially numbered and signed edition. Handsomely framed, they are available only to readers of Commentary and members of the Jewish Book Club, and there is a limit of one to a purchaser.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tution. If, however, the Constitution is to mean only what any five members of the Court choose to make it mean, then it is indeed "a thing of wax," no longer the bulwark of liberty it was designed to be. I cheerfully acknowledge that "social policy is left by the Constitution to the people, not the courts," and with Judge Learned Hand I reject rule by nine "Platonic Guardians." Such is my faith in democracy that I consider that were the people permitted an informed choice between the "prison" . . . and a freewheeling Court that imposes its will upon them, they would opt for the Constitution.

My insistence that the limits on judicial power must be sought in the "intention" of the framers—what other limits are there?—is countered by Mr. Abrams with the argument that resort to that "intention" was utterly discredited by Chief Justice Taney's argument in the *Dred Scott* case that blacks could not be considered citizens under the Constitution since they were not so considered when the Constitution was written. It was not resort to the framers' "intention" that was a "disaster," but the Court's attempt, in the words of Samuel Eliot Morison, "to settle the question of slavery in the territories by extending it legally to all the United States territories." Its intervention in an explosive political issue, said Bickel, led to the Civil War, and that, rather than resort to "intention," which to this day the Court purports to invoke, should be the lesson of *Dred Scott*. Settlement of divisive political issues is for the people or their political representatives, not the Court. It needs to be emphasized that the Court, unlike its apologists, has never openly laid claim to a power to amend the Constitution. Instead, as former Solicitor General Robert Bork wrote: "Value choices are attributed to the Founding Fathers, not to the Court." And, as he observed, such statements indicate appreciation of "what [the Court] thinks its customers [the people] demand."

A moment of illuminating candor deserves to be noted: Mr. Abrams perceives that my "liberal fans," who eagerly resorted to my studies of impeachment and executive privilege (wherein I built on the "intention" of the Founders) when they sought to topple President Nixon and pierce the deepening cloud of executive secrecy, should have understood that I am a "fundamentalist." My fault then is that I measure the powers of the Supreme Court by the same test I applied to those of Nixon, the "intention" of the Founders. To do otherwise is to apply a double standard for the realization of disparate political aims, a tactic that may be well enough for a politician but is unworthy of a scholar. My analysis, states Mr. Abrams, again relying on Winter, lines me up with "those who would have impeached Earl Warren [rather] than with those who would impeach Richard Nixon." Winter has since removed the taint of moral leprosy by recognizing "the large body of academic criticism which argued that the Warren Court was essentially undemocratic because it . . . rewrote law according to the personal values of its members." To "rewrite law" is to usurp legislative power and subvert the Constitution, the paramount impeachable offense. It was Hamilton, no less, who reassured the Founders that judges would not engage in "deliberate usurpation on the authority of the legislature" because they could be impeached. And President Taft declared in 1911: "Make your judges responsible. Impeach them." Such historical facts are not washed out by associating me with the "impeach Warren" Birchers. Nor should scholarly discourse be discolored by McCarthyism but should proceed from a sober evaluation of the facts.

Finally, since Mr. Abrams impeaches my credibility as a scholar, labels me as "lacking in wisdom," as an "inadequate" constitutional theorist, largely in reliance on Alexander M. Bickel, I may be indulged for citing Bickel's quite different opinion. Bickel, with whom I had ventured in an earlier study of judicial review to differ on ten or more important points, wrote with his usual intellectual honesty and generosity that "[Berger] is always deeply informed and powerful, and altogether convincing . . . a distinguished work." To differ on great constitutional issues is not necessarily a sign of intellectual imbecility.

RAOUL BERGER
Concord, Massachusetts

ELLIOTT ABRAMS writes:

In my review, I wrote of Raoul Berger's "considerable intellectual integrity" and his "scholarship and integrity," but concluded that due to his extreme strict constructionism he was "utterly inadequate" as a constitutional theorist and "lack[ed] the wisdom" imparted by the late Alexander M. Bickel's phrase, "We do not confine our judges, we caution them." While it is to be expected that Mr. Berger would not send copies of such a review to his friends, his reaction seems to me a bit overdone, and is in at least one sense slightly misleading.

Mr. Berger seems to feel himself accused of all sorts of sins, ranging from inconsistency to, of all things, "intellectual imbecility," and this may explain his strong rejoinder. What is not so easy to explain, however, is where he finds those accusations in my review.

And what is slightly misleading in Mr. Berger's letter is his suggestion that unless one accepts his view of the Constitution, there can be no constitutional limits at all. Thus, he implies that I am an apologist for every decision of the Warren Court, which I am not, and he states that if we do not bind the Court in the chains of the Constitution, we are "giving the Court a blank check" to rewrite it, thus making of it "a thing of wax." Metaphors aside, it is my view that this either/or proposition is false. One may be greatly concerned about the exercise of judicial power—as I, for one, am—without adhering to the rather extreme position of Mr. Berger, according to which any and all constitutional interpretations are tantamount to illicit amendments of the Constitution by the Justices. Mr. Berger wrote in his book, and repeats here, that the only legitimate mode of constitutional interpretation is the search for the precise intent of the framers, for, he says, "what other limits [on judicial power] are there?" But in fact there are limits to judicial self-aggrandizement in our system. Congress, to take one example, has very broad power over the jurisdiction of the federal courts; and indeed it was Congress—and not the Constitution—that created the district courts and courts of appeals. Similarly, one need not believe that the Court follows the election returns to realize that popular opinion, too, provides restraints on the Court's power.

There is, of course, an inherent

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tension between judicial power and popular democracy, but that tension is not so much a threat to our liberty as a wellspring of it. This Mr. Berger still seems unwilling to admit, for he sees virtually any significant exercise of judicial power as a step on the road "from Weimar to Hitler." I would therefore restate the position I took in my review: in the search for what Bickel called "a rigorous general accord between judicial supremacy and democratic theory," Mr. Berger offers no assistance.

A final word on Alexander M. Bickel. I do not know, since Mr. Berger does not tell us, in what precise context Bickel referred to Mr. Berger as "altogether convincing." Bickel's own works, however, make clear that his position, which is based on subtle and brilliant interpretations of the Constitution, could not be accommodated in Mr. Berger's learned, highly intelligent, yet entirely mechanical search for the exact intentions of the framers a century or two ago.

The U.S. in the World

To the Editor of Commentary:

I would like to communicate my admiration for the solidly informative and cogently reasoned essay, "Africa, Soviet Imperialism, and the Retreat of American Power," by Bayard Rustin and Carl Gershman [October 1977].

The authors clearly appreciate that their essay is only initially concerned with Africa. They conclude: "Sooner or later, the United States will have to decide whether it intends to remain [the leader of the West] and a world power fulfilling its obligations as the only country capable of deterring Soviet expansion."

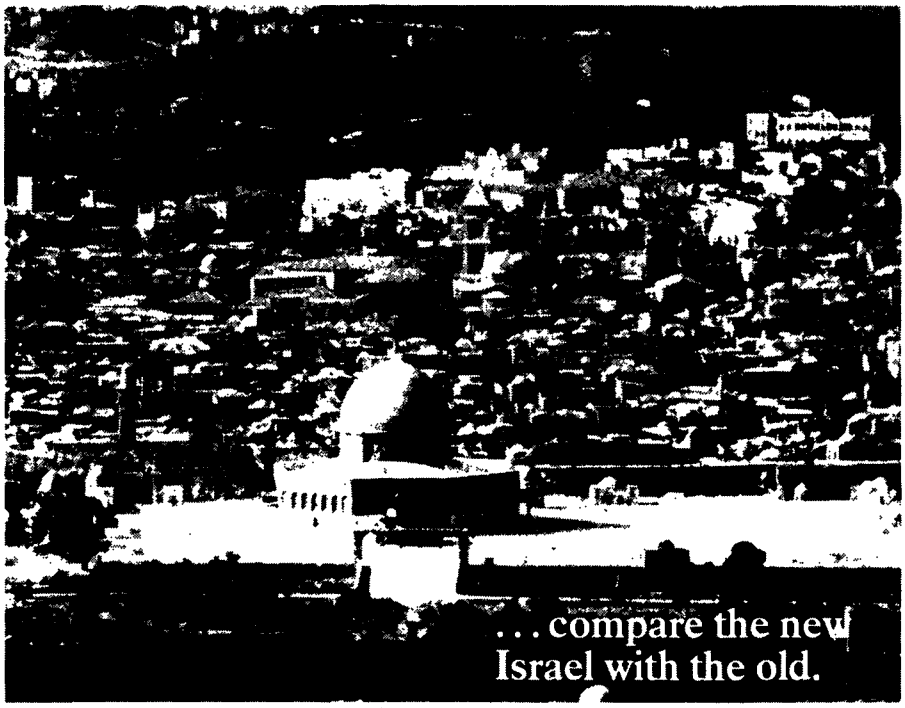
I ask them to consider the alternative that the authoritative American answer to this question of deterring Soviet expansion has already been given, for these next years, and this answer is a selective negative. That this negative is always well-reasoned—or even reasoned at all—I do not assert.

The brackets which I have inserted around the phrase "the leader of the West" are not in the authors' original. But surely such language is today obsolete, perhaps to the point of impoliteness.

Oscar Gass

Washington, D.C.

HILTON gives you two memorable experiences in ISRAEL



At the **Jerusalem Hilton,** experience tells us this visit is most special to you. We look forward to introducing you to the revered sights and sensations of this historic city.

Our hotel enjoys a great location on the highest point in Jerusalem. From your deluxe modern room with balcony you'll have a view of both the old and new sections. There's free shuttle limousine service to take you to the Old City. You'll be within walking distance to the Knesset, the Israel Museum, Hebrew University and Yeshivat Harav Kook with its impressive synagogue. Tours can be arranged from our doorstep to Nazareth and Galilee.

Between explorations, the Jerusalem Hilton offers a world of pleasures: swimming and tennis, dining in the Hamsah Grill, drinks in the Judea Lounge and a piano bar for dancing.

We'll surprise you with special features to enhance the significance of your visit to this truly unique city. Kosher food is served every day of the year. Step into the Sabbath elevator which operates automatically for the observant. There are Sabbath services and full traditional ceremonies on all Jewish Holidays. We'll bring the best of Israel to you and surround you with Hilton International's highest standards of hospitality.

Make the **Tel Aviv Hilton** your other stop in Israel. A few days spent in each will give you an opportunity to appreciate the difference between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The Tel Aviv Hilton, the city's liveliest hotel, is bounded on three sides by Independence Park and on the fourth by the Mediterranean. You'll be close to the Tel Aviv Museum and Mann Auditorium, home of our Philharmonic Orchestra. The business and shopping centers are just minutes away.

All our luxurious rooms and suites overlook the sea. But don't spend the afternoon in your room when you could be tanning yourself at poolside, taking a refreshing swim, playing tennis, mini-golf or shuffleboard with a new friend. We can even offer you a sauna in our health club. Your hotel in Tel Aviv is a true resort in the finest sense of the word.

Naturally, we welcome you to join us in our synagogue services Friday and Saturday. The cuisine is Kosher year round from the newly decorated King Solomon Grill to our New York-style deli restaurant. And we'll do our Hilton International best to make your stay a memorable one.

For reservations, call your travel agent or Hilton Reservation Service.

HILTON INTERNATIONAL

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Law & the Looters

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I have little to add to the many admiring letters [November 1977] on Midge Decter's article "Looting and Liberal Racism" [September 1977]. But I do wish to report an incident described to me by a trusted and meticulously reliable friend who, finding himself in the neighborhood, went to offer his assistance at Lincoln Hospital, toward which ambulances and police cars were bringing victims of the self-inflicted violence of the July 13 riots.

The account is simple. A young black man's arm had been severed by falling plate glass which he himself had smashed, as he admitted, to get a television set. Upon seeing two (also black) policemen entering the emergency room, the would-be looter alternately sobbed and shouted at them, "You should have stopped me." The moral is simple, too: the need for order and restraints is undeniable, not least for the benefit of those most tempted by the momentary lures of chaos.

MARTIN PERETZ
Editor, *New Republic*
Washington, D.C.

Soviet Goals

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his description of George F. Kennan's transition from containment to . . . isolationism ["The Strange Case of George F. Kennan," November 1977], Edward N. Luttwak ignores a different species of blindness in Mr. Kennan's latter-day view of Soviet Russia: his penchant for reducing the importance of ideology in Soviet behavior.

Mr. Kennan's de-ideologization of Soviet policy amounts to viewing the Kremlin's ideological pretensions as mere ritual. . . . Nowhere is this view more explicitly stated than in a recent essay Mr. Kennan contributed to the volume, *Two Hundred Years of American Foreign Policy*, edited by William P. Bundy of the Council on Foreign Relations (NYU Press, 1977). All the shortcomings mentioned by Mr. Luttwak are contained in Mr. Kennan's forty-page dissertation, entitled "The United States and the Soviet Union, 1917-1976": the Manichean attitude toward the "military-industrial complex" . . . ; a more than faint odor of the C. Wright Mills of *The Power Elite*; a dash of cold-war revisionism that boils down to the *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, 20/20 hindsight view that . . . the Soviets really had no intention of sovietizing Greece or Turkey, seizing all of Berlin, or moving into Western Europe, either directly with the Red Army or through fifth-column Communist insurgency.

What about the global pretensions of . . . Marxism-Leninism? According to Mr. Kennan, the Soviets are merely posturing in the Third World (the Angola case to the contrary): "a rhetorical and political stance," he writes, "designed to protect them from charges by the Chinese Communists that they were betraying the cause of Marxism-Leninism." Soviet actions in the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, Mr. Kennan assures us, "did not violate the spirit of the earlier understandings with Messrs. Nixon and Kissinger," although certain "anti-détente forces" wrongly thought they did; these forces obstruct the further unfolding of détente, according to Mr. Kennan, for reasons that appear in his mind to relate to the venal interests of the "Pentagon" and the "military-industrial complex." As to the Soviet military build-up, this is a "product," says Mr. Kennan, rather than a cause of the deterioration of the Soviet-American relationship observed (until very recently) throughout most of the post-1973 period.

In this essay, and in the book cited by Mr. Luttwak, *The Cloud of Danger*, Mr. Kennan displays a . . . strange blindness to the canons of Marxism-Leninism, particularly those which have been updated under the Brezhnev regime (I have catalogued them in *The Troubled Détente*, NYU Press, 1977). He simply ignores a statement like the following, from Brezhnev's address to the Communist party Central Committee on October 25, 1976. Speaking of the exceptions the Soviets make in their (alleged) support of disarmament, Brezhnev said: "I wish only to emphasize that nonuse of force affects inter-state relations and does not embrace social and national-liberation struggles waged by the peoples." . . . Translated into political realities, this evidently means that the Soviets will "follow their revolutionary conscience" (Brezhnev, at the twenty-fifth party congress in spring 1976) when it comes to shipping weapons to "liberation" causes and organizations. Such aid is not an expression of inter-state relations, nor is it a matter for nation-state consideration; it is an inter-*peoples* matter and expresses the Soviet view that no "status-quo worldwide" is permanent, so far as global Communism is concerned. (Global terrorism, over which the Soviet press gloats as evidence of weakness within Western or Third World capitalist countries, is known to be subsidized, in part at least, by such Soviet institutions as a special branch of the Central Committee, the KGB, and the Patrice Lumumba Friendship University, where some of the more famous terrorist leaders, like Ilich Sanchez, got their training.)

One wonders how Mr. Kennan can reduce Marxism-Leninism to mere posturing and ritualism when the Kremlin itself takes it so seriously. . . . Is the shocking Soviet military build-up, with its clearly offensive (as opposed to defensive) strategic purpose and its latest innovations—building a B-1-type supersonic bomber, developing anti-satellite weaponry and ever-larger ICBM's, etc.—to be written off as a mere "reaction" to American military programs, or as the Soviet version of pressure on the Politburo civilians by the Soviet "military-industrial complex"?

. . . Mr. Kennan minimizes the goals and purposes tailored into Soviet policies by the dictates of Marxism-Leninism. Thus, Soviet behavior, as described by him, is shorn of intentions and lacks the guidance of underlying principle —a description which the Soviets themselves would dispute.

ALBERT L. WEEKS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"The Strange Case of George F. Kennan" is not as strange as Edward N. Luttwak would have us believe. There are, indeed, other students of Russian and Soviet history who agree with Mr. Kennan's conclusion that the Soviet leaders are concerned primarily with such internal problems as: (1) a populace indifferent to ideological exhortations, (2) dissent, (3) strong nationalistic feeling, and (4) economic development. Mr. Luttwak faults Mr. Kennan . . . for failing to recall that the expansionist nature of Russia transcended even Lenin's policies. According to Mr. Luttwak, the Soviet leadership's "real strategic choices have been between costs and risks in the pursuit of goals given rather than chosen." The upshot of Mr. Lutt-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wouldn't you like to see your husband reach for a second cup?

Then change to rich Yuban® -for richness worth a second cup.

I did. It used to bother me when my husband kept turning down a second cup. Because I'm too good a wife not to care about good coffee. So I changed to Yuban. It's extra rich taste comes from extra rich beans—like sun ripened beans from Colombia, some of the world's richest coffee beans. That's Yuban—for richness worth a second cup.

Yuban®
The Simcha Coffee

CERTIFIED KOSHER

The premium coffee of General Foods

GF
GENERAL FOODS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wak's interpretation is very similar to the one presented by Richard Pipes in the July 1977 issue of COMMENTARY ["Why the Soviet Union Thinks It Could Fight & Win a Nuclear War"] and is just as flawed. Mr. Kennan, as a "historian of Russian foreign policy," comes to the opposite conclusion. . . . He assesses the intentions of Soviet leaders as follows:

> As the leadership looks abroad, it sees more dangers than inviting opportunities. Its reactions and purposes are therefore much more defensive than aggressive. It has no desire for any major war, least of all for a nuclear one. It fears and respects American military power, even as it tries to match it. Plotting an attack on Western Europe would be, in the circumstances, the last thing that would come into its head.

Both Mr. Kennan and Mr. Luttwak have developed their prescriptions for American foreign policy from the conclusions they have reached concerning Soviet intentions. The former wishes there was less interdependence so that the United States could focus on its domestic problems and on its limited vital interests abroad—in Western Europe, Japan, and Israel. Wishing will not make this occur. Nevertheless, Mr. Kennan's priorities are correct and we are well advised to maintain a low profile elsewhere, for we have neither the resources nor the answers needed to be of much help.

Mr. Luttwak's emphasis on the balance of power obscures the depreciating effect that increasing interdependence has on military power. Soviet military power did not prevent the Soviets from being ousted from Egypt and Somalia. But by focusing on the military aspect to the virtual exclusion of other factors, Mr. Luttwak, like Mr. Pipes in his earlier essay, projects an invidious image of the Soviet Union, an image that leads to . . . increased U.S. defense spending. However, when the Soviet Union responds in kind (by developing, for instance, the MIG-29 to cope with the F-15, a tank buster to compare with the A-10, etc.), . . . the self-fulfilling prophecy is back at point one, with nobody more secure for the effort.

It is precisely this tendency toward the "total militarization" of American foreign policy that prompted George F. Kennan to write *The Cloud of Danger*. . . .

WALTER C. UHLER
Cornwells Heights, Pennsylvania

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK writes:

Albert L. Weeks's letter is interesting. Since I have no expert knowledge of Soviet policy-formation, I can make no useful comment. Walter C. Uhler's letter is interesting also, and in a way serviceable. Rarely have I seen a more concise compendium of what I deem to be error—not Sovietological error, of course, but mere logical confusion.

"Soviet leaders are concerned primarily with . . . internal problems." Of course, all leaders must be. So what? The question is how much effort do they allocate to foreign affairs to change the status quo. No country in the world uninvolved in actual warfare expends the proportions of its resources which the Soviet Union allocates to military growth, covert operations, military aid, and so on. Besides, what is "internal"? The progression of Soviet thought on internal problems might well run as follows: Czechoslovakia must be dominated to insure that the western Ukraine remains tranquil; West Germany must be brought to an accommodation if the sources of Czech dissidence are to be stilled; and, finally, how can West Germany be persuaded to show proper respect if the United States remains powerful enough to encourage its full independence?

Mr. Uhler follows George F. Kennan in positing a choice between a Soviet Union which seeks nuclear war and a Soviet Union firmly attached to the status quo. This is strategic illiteracy. There is much choice between nuclear war and inaction, and that is precisely where movement occurs, fueled by a relentless increase in Soviet military strength. Mr. Uhler need not take the Pentagon's word for the extent and pace of Soviet military growth; the figures published by Congressman Aspin are perfectly adequate to prove the point.

Interdependence depreciates military power. This is a by now hallowed logical error. The theory was most plausibly expounded just before 1914 to explain why there would be no world war. Interdependence does increase the obstacles to the independent conduct of war-

יידישער ווייסנשאפטלעכער אינסטיטוט — ייוואָ

YIVO INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH RESEARCH
DEVOTED TO THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND THE HUMANITIES

מאקס ווינרייך־צענטער פֿאר העכערע ייִדישע שטודיעס

Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies
1048 FIFTH AVENUE • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10028 • LEhigh 5-6700 • Cables: YIVO, NEW YORK

The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research and the Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies will jointly sponsor an interdisciplinary conference on Yiddish and East European Jewish Studies to take place October 29-31, 1978.

The Conference Committee welcomes proposals for papers dealing with the social, economic, political, and cultural history of Jews in Eastern and Central Europe and of Eastern European Jews in America; the Holocaust and its aftermath; the period of mass settlement of Jews in the United States; Yiddish language, literature, folklore, and ethnography.

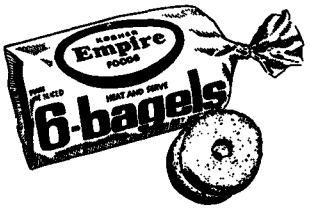
Please let us know now of your intention to submit a proposal for a paper. Papers should not normally exceed an oral delivery time of twenty minutes. A double-spaced typewritten abstract will be due no later than May 1, 1978. All correspondence should be addressed to:

Naomi Utevsky, *for the Conference Committee*
YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
1048 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10028

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Empire Kosher is a whole lot more than a lot of good chicken:

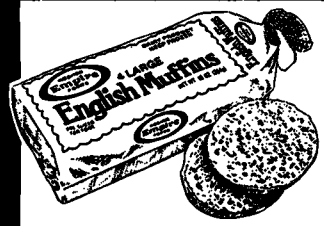
CHALLAH



BAGELS

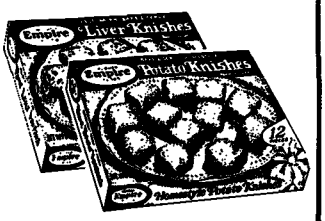
TRIANGLE POTATO LATKES

BAGEL PIZZAS



ENGLISH MUFFINS

POTATO PANCAKES

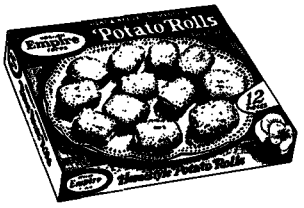


KNISHES (POTATO) (LIVER)

ENGLISH MUFFIN PIZZAS

CHOPPED LIVER SPREAD

YOGURT



POTATO ROLLS

CHEESE PIZZAS, 3-PACK

BLINTZES (CHEESE) (FRUIT)

KOSHER
Empire
FOODS

The Most Trusted Name in Kosher Poultry and Foods

CHEESE PIZZA, 10 OZ.

Empire Kosher Frozen Foods...all Kosher-good

Ask for Empire Kosher Foods at Kosher Butcher Shops, Food Stores and Dellys.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fare, but it also creates particularly intense motives for waging war.

"Soviet military power did not prevent the Soviets from being ousted from Egypt and Somalia." Efforts do not always succeed. The United States was "ousted" from Vietnam. Are we trying to get back, as the Soviet Union is relentlessly trying to get back into Egypt and elsewhere? Persistence is not an elegant virtue but it does make empires. Compare the Russian effort to obtain a tract of Baltic coastline from Swedes, Germans, Poles, and so on, over a period of centuries. Each time there was an advance, followed by defeat and retreat, but not complete retreat. As waves advance on a beach in the rising tide, Russian control in each bout of conflict advanced and waned, but never fully disappeared. Now Soviet control reaches over the Baltic coast, the middle of Germany, as itself redefined post-1945.

MIG-29 vs. F-15; tank-buster vs. A-10. Some Soviet weapons-development efforts are imitative, others reactive, others peculiar to the Soviet Union. The wide choice and the broad range are both available, given the scale of military mobilization: so what? What counts are the effective options for coercion that military growth opens for Soviet foreign policy, to be used for expansion without war; not territorial expansion necessarily, or at all, but an expansion of control, or at least of influence. How much more Soviet influence is acceptable to Mr. Uhler? My own tastes, and values, make the present extent of the Soviet empire already much too large, and its outer sphere of influence already far too extensive.

"'Total militarization' of American foreign policy." Those already weak fear their own inadequate strength, while seemingly unafraid of the strength of others. Mr. Kennan's call for an enlightened passivity reveals a willful ignorance of the dynamics of power.

The New Equality

To the Editor of Commentary:

Eugene J. McCarthy's article ["A Note on the New Equality," November 1977] calls for elaboration of a point he makes in passing, a point which may confirm the view that while the Founding Fathers fought for liberty, they never intended to establish "equality." Mr. McCarthy refers to the constitutional provision which insures that each state, no matter what its size or population, shall have two Senators. He adds: "No proposal has yet been made to reduce senatorial representation to a strict population base."

The reason no such proposal could be made, let alone enacted, is that the Constitution (Article V) says that no amendment can be passed by Congress, or ratified by the states. whereby a state "without its consent, shall be deprived of its equal suffrage in the Senate." In other words, senatorial representation is beyond the amending power granted by the Constitution.

Arnold Beichman
University of Massachusetts
Boston, Massachusetts

To the Editor of Commentary:

Eugene J. McCarthy is surely correct in asserting that too much "equality" inevitably leads to the weakening of some major institutions in society. The effect of Open Admissions on the City University of New York provides a good example of this principle.

Unfortunately, Mr. McCarthy betrays a serious lack of understanding of economics in his discussion of wage policies and the negative income tax (NIT). He claims that a part of the new equality is the concept that workers doing unpleasant work should be paid higher wages for their efforts. Actually, this idea can be traced back to Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), and is known in economic theory today as compensating wage differentials. In order to attract workers into jobs with unpleasant working conditions or high risks, an employer must pay his workers higher wages than they would receive in more pleasant or safer jobs. For instance, the wages paid to workers on the Alaska pipeline were considerably higher than wages earned by workers of comparable skills in the lower forty-eight states because of the adverse conditions in Alaska. These differentials arise even without government intervention. . . .

Milton Friedman, who could hardly be called an advocate of the new equality, is generally given credit as being the originator of the NIT. The NIT is designed to provide a minimum standard of living for all and to avoid bureaucratic meddling in poor people's lives. While Mr. McCarthy is correct when he asserts that there is no theoretical method of determining the fair or optimal benefit level, economic analysis shows that there is a tradeoff between the benefit level and work incentives. If benefits are set too high, the work disincentives that arise may in the long run cause an increase rather than a decrease in poverty. There is an important lesson in the analysis of the NIT for both the critics and the advocates of the new equality. While eliminating gross inequalities may be beneficial to society, too much inequality is counterproductive. The real problem we all face is knowing how much is too much.

Donald J. Cymrot
Department of Economics
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Eugene J. McCarthy writes:

As I read the Constitution, senatorial representation is not really beyond the amending power, although Arnold Beichman is right about the additional requirement of state consent. In any case, this was not the real issue of my article.

I am aware of the theory of compensating wage differentials noted by Donald J. Cymrot, but I doubt that he or most other economists would want to base all wages on that theory alone. Skills, experience, and education must also be considered.

I supported assured minimum income as early as 1968, and in the Senate I was one of the major supporters of national standards for unemployment compensation.

But while I favor providing a minimum standard of living to all and avoiding bureaucratic meddling in poor people's lives, I am not convinced that the negative income tax is the best instrument to accomplish those goals. The Internal Revenue Service is noted for its bureaucratic meddling in the lives of rich people and middle-income people; I doubt that it would treat poor people differently. There are other and better ways of determining benefit levels than pegging them to the income-tax system.

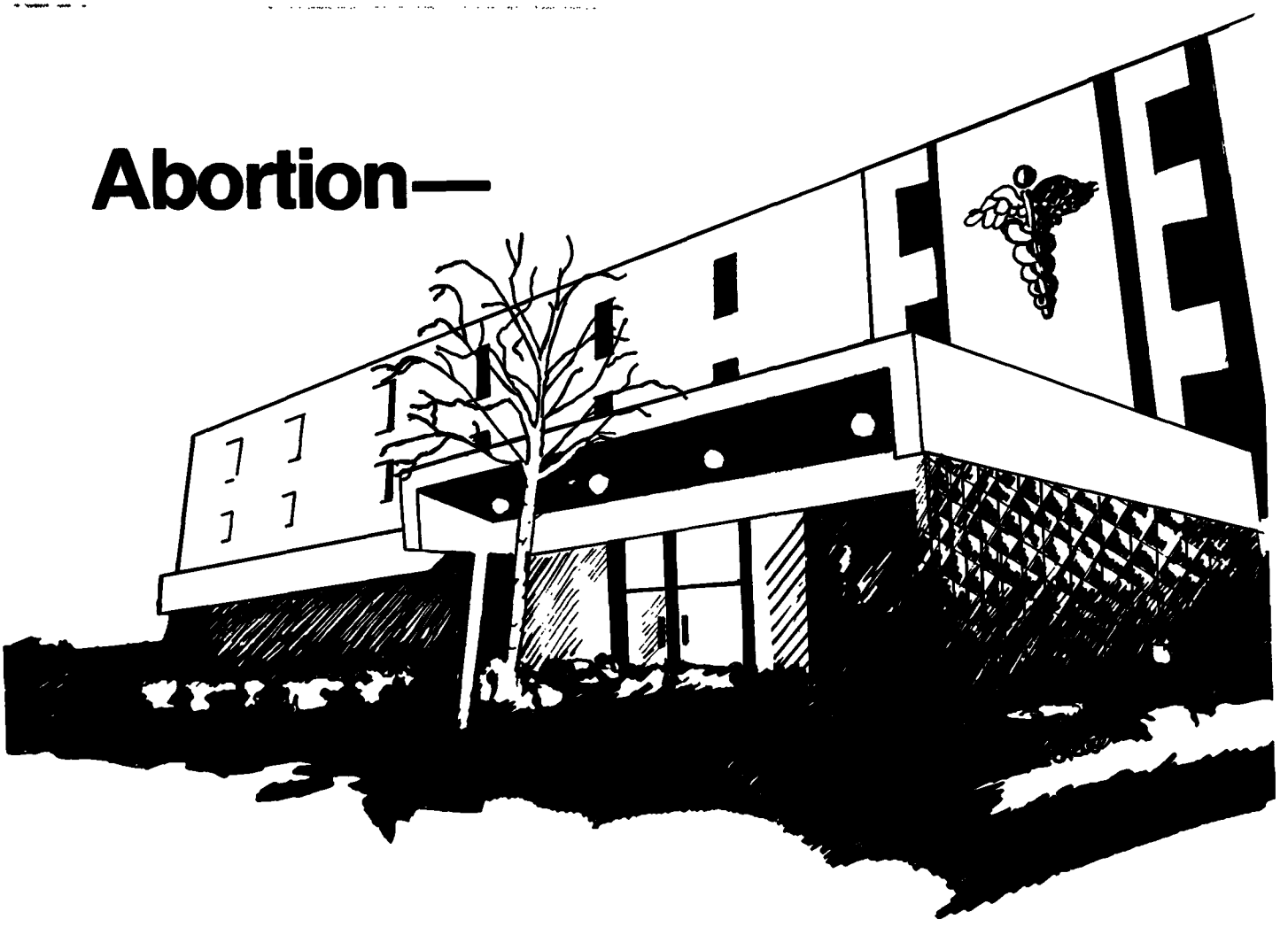
Eurocommunism

To the Editor of Commentary:

I am loath to disagree, even in part, with the very knowledgeable Michael Ledeen ["The 'News'

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Abortion—



America's Armageddon!

This nation has legalized the extermination of unwanted human beings. Destined to die an antiseptic death, the youngest of the young cry out for their moment of time.

To the most critical problems of human existence, our social engineers offer answers that spell death.
We offer life—for that and only that is the meaning of our civilization.

Non Sectarian Committee for Life
Box 1234
Mount Vernon, New York 10551

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

About Eurocommunism," October 1977] but, in my view, he is only half right.

He is, of course, right in warning against accepting the authenticity of the tactical "conversion" of the Western Communist parties to democracy and pluralism; but he is wrong in assuming that the Soviet Union will, therefore, acquiesce in a Eurocommunism that "is a threat to the West and hardly menaces the Soviet Union at all." The fallacy lies in assuming that the second necessarily follows from the first.

This is made quite clear by the fateful collapse (after Mr. Ledeen's article was written) of negotiations between the French Socialists and Communists on their Common Program, under whose banner it was widely expected that the Socialist-Communist alliance would sweep into power in the approaching parliamentary elections. The collapse cannot be explained merely as a result of the offensive by Georges Marchais (the Communist leader) against François Mitterrand (the Socialist leader) in the form of suddenly escalated demands which Marchais knew would be unacceptable. This was the appearance, but the cause runs deeper. It is, in fact, *the Brezhnev offensive against Marchais*—the opening gun in Moscow's broader assault on Eurocommunism. Let us examine the matter.

The Communist parties of Western Europe found themselves in this situation: with no prospect of revolution in the foreseeable future and, at the same time, permanently excluded from political power, or even from sharing power as a halfway house to full power. They therefore opted for the tactic of a "national" policy in place of "proletarian internationalism" (a euphemism for Soviet primacy). They rejected the Soviet model (though only Santiago Carrillo in Spain went so far as to deny that the Soviet Union was a socialist state); repudiated the doctrine of proletarian dictatorship; discovered the virtues of bourgeois democracy and pluralism; and, excepting the French . . . , even declared their support of NATO.

To the Soviet Union, on the other hand, the only *raison d'être* for the Communist parties is to serve as instruments of Soviet policy, with unquestioning loyalty to the Soviet Union as an article of faith. Should the leadership of any party deviate even one iota from this line and take the course of "opportunistic bourgeois nationalism," which threatens to disorient the faithful, Moscow would not hesitate to isolate and overthrow it: witness the East European purges and interventions (the suppressed Hungarians and Czechs were the first proto-Eurocommunists) and the earlier ouster of the American Communist leader, Earl Browder (which also signaled the launching of Stalin's cold war against the West).

At last year's East Berlin Conference of European parties, the Soviet Union only seemingly acquiesced in the declarations of autonomy of the Western parties. Now the counteroffensive has begun, with the French party chosen as first victim because its strong pro-Moscow base presents the best chance of success. Marchais has been warned: either return to the fold or Moscow will . . . bring about your overthrow or create a

You'll never guess where Lufthansa German Airlines flies to.

Germany you say? Naturally. But guess again. And again. About 100 times. Because that's how many different places you can reach all around the world on Lufthansa. 72 countries. On six continents. Just about anywhere people want to go! From Australia to Zaïre. And wherever Lufthansa flies, you have our famous service and efficiency going for you.

And most certainly, we can fly you to Tel Aviv. And we serve delicious kosher meals on your way to Israel or wherever you go. But please be sure to tell us in advance.

Ask your travel agent about us.

Lufthansa German Airlines
680 Fifth Avenue, One World Trade Center (Lobby),
New York, N.Y. 10019. Tel. (212) 357-8400

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new party. He has clearly made his choice. . . .

The outcome of the struggle between Moscow and the Western parties is difficult to foresee. There are three major possibilities: (1) the parties will submit; (2) the parties will resist and be splintered but the heretical split-offs will remain "Leninist," in a situation analogous to that of Yugoslavia, Albania, and China; or (3) a minority in several of the countries will break with Leninism and move toward social democracy. However it may turn out, the consequences are likely to be devastating among the "progressive" intellectuals. The precipitous decline in the influence of Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir, the vindication of Raymond Aron, the emergence of Jean-François Revel (*The Totalitarian Temptation*) and the young generation of "New Philosophers" led by Bernard-Henri Lévy* are signs pointing to the future.

If this analysis is correct, the breach in the French Socialist-Communist alliance is both inevitable and irreversible. This new development may be the hinge of history in more ways than one. It is more hopeful in terms of the internal life of the West; it is more ominous in terms of Russia's unswerving expansionist goals.

ELIAS M. SCHWARZBART
New York City

MICHAEL LEDEEN writes:

It is quite true that the Soviet Union does not like the rhetoric of Georges Marchais in France, Enrico Berlinguer in Italy, and Santiago Carrillo in Spain. On the other hand, Western European Communist parties had no chance of coming to power on the themes of Bolshevism; they are doing much better (indeed, spectacularly so in Italy) with their newer slogans. The question is one of degree: how much rhetorical independence (Elias M. Schwarzbart and I agree that it is purely rhetorical) will the Kremlin accept in return for greater leverage over Western Europe?

The Italian party (PCI) has been by far the most independent of the Kremlin for the longest time, and there has never been a serious attempt by the Kremlin to sabotage the PCI. As for Carrillo, the attempt to overthrow him long predates the current ideological rupture.

This demonstates that the Kremlin is looking at realities, and not —as our own "experts" generally do—at myths. The Soviet Union will try to destroy a Communist party which is genuinely hostile to the Kremlin's line, no matter how orthodox its pretensions, and it will tolerate a great deal of "heresy" if the party in question is known to be loyal. Furthermore, the Soviets support Eurocommunists so long as they succeed in their tactical methods, but pressure them as soon as there is a step backward. Hence Berlinguer (with 36 per cent of the popular vote) is supported, but Marchais (whose party's strength has been steadily dropping in the polls, and who at most could have aspired to become the leader of the junior party in a tenuous left-wing coalition) has come under pressure. And Carrillo, since he is known to be disloyal (it was hardly necessary to await the publication of his book, *Eurocommunism and the State*, to discover this), receives the mailed fist.

There is one final consideration: even when a party clearly serves the ideological interests of the Soviet Union, it is not certain that its participation in, or domination of, a Western European government would serve the power interests of the Kremlin. As I wrote, the Russians are afraid of an awakened West: they do not want a revival of the cold war, a shift to a more actively anti-Communist policy in the United States and Germany, or new evidence of backbone in NATO. And they fear that any or all of these things might happen if France or Italy were to have substantial Communist participation in the national government. The Soviets might prefer to have strong Communist parties in opposition in such countries, thus destabilizing NATO without running the risks of backlash.

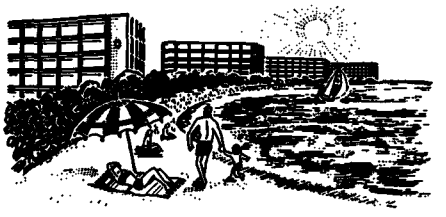
The rupture in France, then, far from marking a new epoch in the relations between the Kremlin and its foreign comrades, simply con-

* See the article by Roger Kaplan, "France's New Philosophers," beginning on p. 73 of this issue.—ED.

ROMANIA 1978
Everything everybody loves is the same. Even the prices.

They love our beautiful Bucharest

...our magnificent Carpathian Mountains



...our sun-kissed Black Sea shore

...and our painted "inside-out" monasteries.

Most of all, the world's tourists love our low prices...whether they come for fun, for sightseeing, for our health spas, or the revitalizing geriatric treatments of Dr. Ana Aslan. So for 1978, we're keeping Romania unspoiled, our warm welcome undiluted. And while costs soar everywhere else, we're keeping our low prices unchanged. Send for a FREE brochure.

ROMANIAN NATIONAL TOURIST OFFICE
573 Third Avenue New York, N.Y. 10016 Dept. C-1

Please send FREE tour brochure and guidebook to Romania.

NAME_____
ADDRESS_____
CITY_____
STATE_____ ZIP_____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tinues the old pattern. The risks that PCF entry into a Left government in France raised for the Kremlin were not worth the potential gain. But if the PCF had been the stronger of the two parties of the Left, the break might not have taken place. In Italy, on the other hand, the Kremlin is probably prepared to run risks in order to drive a wedge into the heart of the Atlantic alliance.

As for the effect of the rupture in France, I hope Mr. Schwarzbart is right, and that the French (and the rest of us) have learned the lesson once and for all that Communist parties will abide by the rules of democracy only when doing so serves their own anti-democratic interests. But it is not yet clear that the French have learned this lesson. So far, the big losers in recent polls in France have been the Socialists.

Mahler

To the Editor of Commentary:

The revival of interest in the music of Gustav Mahler is the most striking phenomenon in today's musical life, and it is therefore only fitting that Commentary should have turned its attention to it ["The Mahler Everyone Loves" by Samuel Lipman, November 1977].

Yet I feel that Mr. Lipman distorts the facts concerning Mahler's life and art in a number of crucial ways. Mr. Lipman's assessment of Mahler's life as tragic is arbitrary, and serves to distort its significance. It is preferable to view Mahler's life in terms of alienation; he was a man who had an unfathomably rich inner life, a force of character, and a commitment to self-generated ideals which we can scarcely imagine. The facts show that Mahler devoted a tremendous amount of energy to fighting the bourgeois cultural establishment of his day. Mahler's external successes were insufficient to satisfy his artistic ideal or to calm the religious and philosophical doubts that haunted him throughout his short life, and which were in turn the inspiration for his music. It is this duality that makes Mahler the man and his lifework so appealing today. . . .

Mr. Lipman accuses Mahler of being unoriginal. . . . But the rich tradition of Central European classical music would be impossible without the complex fabric of influences to be found in the work of all composers. Mr. Lipman mentions the "extraordinarily close resemblances" between certain sections of Mahler's works and certain works by Liszt and Busoni; yet he conveniently fails to remind his readers that Wagner had an assistant standing by to play piano works by Chopin and Liszt while he was composing *Tristan und Isolde*, that Haydn's oratorios could not have been written without the prior example of Handel, and that the powerful opening of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony shone as an irresistibly powerful beacon for three quarters of a century drawing composers . . . inevitably toward it. . . .

Finally, Mr. Lipman states that Mahler's new popularity is based "only" upon the satisfaction it can provide audiences and on the mythology of redeemed failure promulgated by the avant-garde. But that coterie is so far removed from the consciousness of today's audience that it seems highly unlikely that it could inspire such an unprecedented phenomenon as two different performances of Mahler's Eighth Symphony (Symphony of a Thousand) in a recent one-week period in New York. . . .

Paul Harris Forman
New York City

Samuel Lipman writes:

One of the intents of my piece on Mahler was to make clear my disagreement with the prevailing tragic interpretation of his life, an interpretation which seems to me to lie at the heart of both the composer's attitude toward himself and also the musical community's conception of him as a public figure. Though Paul Harris Forman disagrees with the tragic interpretation, I cannot see that his preference for alienation over tragedy as the key to understanding Mahler does anything more than transform, in a thoroughly modern way, a heroic idea into an anxious one. I appreciate that it is tempting to see Mahler as a kind of young Marxist not only alienated but also "fighting the bourgeois establishment of his day"; unfortunately for such an updating, his music would seem to be deeply rooted in the prevailing Austro-Hungarian world, and indeed a luxuriant flowering of Central European bourgeois culture.

I am less than happy with such formulations as "an unfathomably rich inner life" and "a force of character and a commitment to self-generated ideals which we can scarcely imagine." I do not know what kind of external success would be required to match the kind of inner life, character, and commitment Mr. Forman has in mind; it is clear, however, that what we can neither fathom nor scarcely imagine is hardly amenable to intellectual discussion.

Mr. Forman's argument that musical tradition would be impossible without influence seems circular. In any case, what is important is not Mahler's borrowing but the assimilation of what he had borrowed. It is here that Mahler was in trouble, for he often failed to make the past his own.

I did not use the word "only" in describing the reasons for Mahler's popularity. What I did was try to base that popularity upon the present conjunction of the continuing romantic taste of the audience with the current needs of progressive musical thought. Not only is it significant that both music lovers and the avant-garde find Mahler good; it is also important that these disparate groups do so for vastly different reasons, and that these groups are not being brought closer together by their regard for Mahler.

There is one aspect of Mr. Forman's letter which I find disquieting. Though he is plainly on the side of the audience of music lovers and against the productions of the avant-garde, he does not seem to be able to say what I suspect is for him true—that he finds Mahler's music beautiful. When he talks about Mahler, he uses the intellectual categories of advanced opinion—alienation, bourgeois cultural establishment, doubts, duality, etc. It is curious that the word beauty is now so hard to employ. Is it because those who are sensitive to its sway are embarrassed by its lack of a cutting critical edge?

Rights & Liberty

To the Editor of Commentary:

Commentary has done a gross disservice to its readers in publishing William J. Bennett's review of Ronald Dworkin's *Taking Rights Seriously* [Books in Review, August 1977]. . . . The errors made in the review are numerous, but I shall mention only one as an example of the way in which Mr. Bennett consistently distorts and misrepresents Dworkin's arguments.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Ultimate Threat To Academic Freedom

Leon Knight is a college teacher, an officer of the Minnesota Democratic Party and an unabashed liberal. He is also opposed to compulsory unionism—which places him on the enemies list of the National Education Association.

In 1968-69, Knight served as president of the faculty association at North Hennepin Community College in suburban Minneapolis. He fully supports the right of everyone to join and participate in labor unions. But he draws the line at compulsory affiliation.

"The big difference," he says, "between the faculty association I headed up and the union there now is the issue of voluntary versus compulsory."

After the faculty association became an affiliate of the militant NEA, the association backed legislation requiring compulsory union fees for public employees. Once passed, it was decided all faculty members would have to pay a fee to keep their jobs. Knight's liberal philosophy wouldn't allow him to go along.

"The idea of academic freedom," he explains, "the idea of the dissident person, the idea of a person who marches to a different drum, is very precious. And yet unionism is coming in and saying I must march to that drum."

"If they can determine," he stresses, "not what I teach in the classroom, but whether I teach at all, that is the ultimate threat to academic freedom."

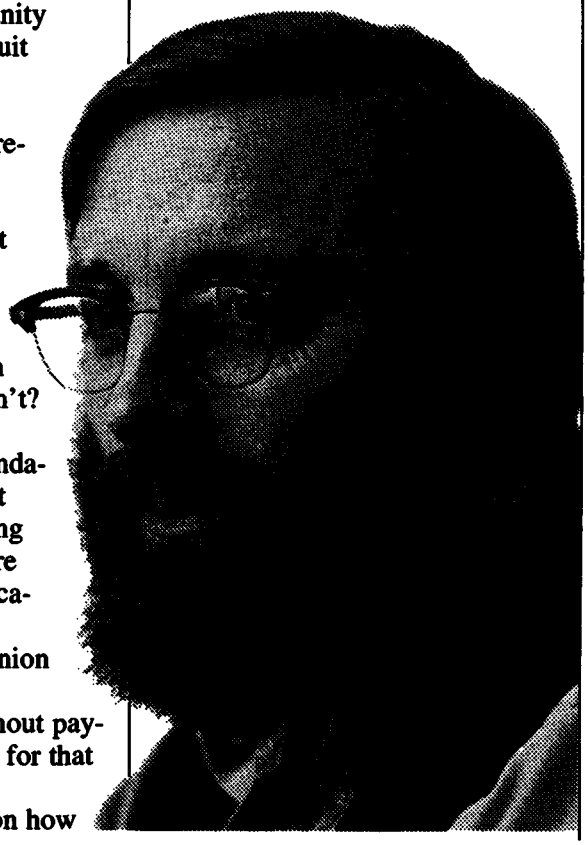
Leon Knight went to court to protect his Constitutional rights. With the help of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, he and 19 other members of the Minnesota Community College system brought suit against the NEA and its local affiliates. The suit challenges the forced representation and compulsory fee provisions of Minnesota's Public Employment Labor Relations Act.

Leon Knight was fortunate. He found help. But how many other Leon Knights in America haven't?

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is helping everyone it can. It is currently assisting individual workers in more than 75 cases involving academic freedom, political freedom, freedom from union violence, and the right to work for government without paying a private organization for that privilege.

For more information on how you can help American educators like Leon Knight write:

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation
Suite 600
8316 Arlington Boulevard
Fairfax, Va. 22038



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

book Publishing

Manuscripts invited for prompt editorial review and terms of publication. All categories invited including scholarly works. Professional editing, design and production plus expert promotion and distribution since 1920. Send manuscript or inquiry, or call (215) 642-8303. Ask for free Author's Guide B-35.

DORRANCE & COMPANY
35 Cricket Terr., Ardmore, PA 19003

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK IN 90 DAYS

Wanted: book manuscripts on all subjects. Expert editing, design, manufacture and marketing—all under one roof. Completed books in 90 days. Low break-even. Two FREE books and literature give details, costs, success stories. Write or phone Dept. 371

EXPOSITION PRESS, INC.
900 So. Oyster Bay Rd., Hicksville, N.Y. 11801
(516) 822-5700 (212) 895-0081

CONTINUITY OF EXCELLENCE

The Mount Sinai Medical Center Pooled Income Fund helps assure excellence of medical service in the future, while providing donors and loved ones with life income.

Berne Bachrach, Director,
Deferred Gifts Office,
One Gustave L. Levy Place,
New York, N.Y. 10029
Telephone: (212) 650-6372

Le Moal

942 Third Avenue
(Between 56 & 57 St.)
New York, N.Y. 10022 MU 8 8860

Mr. Bennett tells us that Dworkin "says it is 'absurd to suppose that men and women have any general right to liberty at all.' " He then goes on to say that Dworkin believes that there is evidence ". . . that the demand for and interest in liberty are psychologically damaging: for his authority he cites R.D. Laing, who believes that 'the need to choose, which follows from liberty, is an unnecessary source of destructive tension.' " Mr. Bennett thus leaves the reader with the clear impression that Dworkin is an opponent of liberty, and that he would support an authoritarian regime which would free us of the harm which we suffer when we are left to make important choices for ourselves.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. A careful reading of the chapter from which these quotations are drawn (Chapter 12, "What Rights Do We Have?") reveals the following two points: first, that Dworkin rejects a general "right to liberty," which could in any case be of little value since the government is obviously justified in invading our liberty in a variety of ways (because every regulatory law restricts our liberty to some extent), in favor of a more firmly grounded right to certain fundamental *liberties* (such as those found in the Bill of Rights) which could not be set aside by the government ". . . in spite of the fact that the common interest would be served by doing so." Secondly, Dworkin cites Laing on the psychological damage which liberty may do us in order to make it clear that this right to fundamental liberties does *not* rest on any assumption that liberty will make us happier, but on "grounds of political morality" which would hold *even if* people would be happier under authoritarianism. . . .

ROBERT S. GERSTEIN
Department of Political Science
University of California
Los Angeles, California

WILLIAM J. BENNETT writes:

Anyone reading my review would be left with the impression that I take Dworkin to be an opponent of a *right* to liberty. This would be the impression because it is what I said. It is true, and it is not difficult to understand. I never said or implied that Dworkin would support an authoritarian regime, and I do not see what my reason would be for saying so. Dworkin has enough problems without being accused of knavery.

Robert S. Gerstein would make a better critic of what I said if he were more attentive to what I said. I assume that my other "numerous errors," mentioned but never identified by Mr. Gerstein, are, like the one above, to be found in other nonexistent passages in my review.

Orthodoxy in Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If S. Zalman Abramov maintains an "austere objectivity" in his treatment of the Jewish religion in the Jewish state, the same cannot be said of Howard M. Sachar, who uses his review of Abramov's book, *Perpetual Dilemma: Jewish Religion in the Jewish State* [Books in Review, October 1977], as a springboard to launch an intemperate attack against Orthodoxy in Israel. . . .

To state that the rabbinate of Israel has had nothing to offer with regard to practical matters of ethical conduct, civil functioning, or national survival is quite typical of the viewpoint of those in Israeli public life, prior to the accession of Menahem Begin, who refuse to inquire into or to acknowledge the vast richness of this tradition. If Mr. Sachar were to undertake such an inquiry, he might conclude that the Orthodox subculture, rather than being a "counterpoint to the nation's vaunted democratic achievements," is an essential foundation for them.

This may explain why the religious parties of Israel have bargaining power greater than what their 15 per-cent voting strength would seem to entitle them to. The reason for a seemingly passive acquiescence by the majority may be a less than fully conscious realization that the Jewish tradition provides the Israeli public with its principal justification and primary source of strength in its mortal struggle for survival.

HERSHEL BARG
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Editorial Note

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The excellent review by Joseph Shattan of Michael Ledeen's study of D'Annunzio, *The First Duce* [Books in Review, December 1977], was slightly marred by one of those easily understandable errors of omission. The interviews conducted by Mr. Ledeen of both George

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mosse on Nazism and Renzo De Felice on Fascism, both of which were cited and quoted by Mr. Shattan, first appeared in English in *transaction/Society*. . . .

IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ
transaction/Society
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

On California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Daphne Merkin's otherwise perceptive review of Cyra McFadden's *The Serial* [Books in Review, October 1977] contains a major factual error. *The Serial*'s characters are residents of Northern—not Southern—California; their "high-energy" lives are vintage Marin County—a cosmic zone due north of San Francisco. . . .

This is not to suggest that Southern California life is a model of restraint. Readers of Nathanael West and Joan Didion are familiar with the sun-drenched madness peculiar to Los Angeles. But the Bay Area scene that *The Serial* probes has a special sensibility. It is a land of hot tubs, defining one's space, self-awareness, holistic medicine, as compared with the Southland's Jacuzzis, being laid back, self-fulfillment, est. But all this is to cavil with Miss Merkin's main point. Life in Mill Valley—and, for that matter, the Hollywood Hills—assumes not only a surfeit of money but an uneasiness with it that seeks assurance in Cuisinarts and Bierkenstocks. More important is the need to be hip, to have the appropriately advanced views; to be liberated from bourgeois self-denial and self-discipline. None of this would be too disturbing if it were accompanied by an awareness of the self-indulgence and class privilege that underlie the advanced styles of life found in *The Serial*. Instead, we find a heavy smog of social elitism and political quietism that threatens to block the view of Mount Tamalpais.

KEVIN V. MULCAHY
Claremont, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Daphne Merkin suggests that political content is absent from *The Serial* because Cyra McFadden "has dulled her bite" and has "half a mind to protect the very society she has undertaken to expose." The logic of this conclusion escapes me; but, in any event, the assertion that the trendy political notions of Mrs. McFadden's characters are conspicuous by their absence is simply wrong. A brief review of the book reveals references to: the Sierra Club, Barbara Boxer's campaign, Abzug and Steinem, Wasp imperialism, and Jerry Brown. These references are at the very least derisive. Mrs. McFadden's intention was not to chew more than she bit off, and nothing would have been gained from rounding out the lives of her characters—who, after all, are cartoons—by giving disproportionate attention to their politics. . . .

DENNIS F. ZICKERMAN
Berkeley, California

DAPHNE MERKIN writes:

My apologies to Kevin V. Mulcahy and his fellow Californians for placing Marin County at the wrong end of the state. The error had more to do with a deficient grasp on my part of the rudiments of geography than with any native Eastern chauvinism.

I do not see what Dennis F. Zickerman finds mysterious about my logic. It seemed to me that Cyra McFadden was strikingly less relentless in her satiric treatment of the politics of her characters than she was in dealing with almost everything else connected with what Mr. Mulcahy calls their "advanced styles of life." I was not suggesting that Mrs. McFadden flesh out intentionally stick-like figures by giving "disproportionate attention to their politics"; I was merely commenting on her lack of attention to this aspect of their lives.

FROM IRELAND WITH LOVE
Ireland... friendly, unspoiled, inviting, exciting. From sightseeing to shopping, from castles to cottages, to the Abbey Theatre. And it's described to perfection in this beautiful 32-page full color book. Take the first step toward a perfect vacation by writing, then see your travel agent.
IRISH TOURIST BOARD
Box 1200
Long Island City, New York 11101
IRISH TOURIST BOARD, BOX 1200, LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y. 11101
Please send me your free, 32-page color book, "From Ireland With Love."
NAME
ADDRESS
CITY STATE ZIP
MY TRAVEL AGENCY IS
F2-81

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Business and the rational mind, Part I

Surviving in a complex world•The slot machine theory•Strengths, frailties, and shared water

As one of the world's largest industrial organizations, we know we can retain our franchise to do business around the world only as long as the job we do is effective, useful, and important in serving people's needs. And only as long as people realize this.

We have to be sensitively concerned with society's problems and hopes, even if only in our own self-interest, because we are intricately involved in the complexities of this increasingly complex world. And we learned a long time ago that the success of a company depends in part on factors that don't appear in the balance sheet.

We believe the United States has entered a period in which people will increasingly want to know more about a corporation than just the quality of its products and services. We believe that more and more people are going to want to know something of the value patterns and basic convictions of the individuals who run a corporation, the individuals who in many ways set the tone for the entire company and who inevitably exert an impact on society.

Which is to say that what people think of a company has a lot to do with whether or not it makes money, or indeed even survives. A company such as ours certainly cannot plead that it exists solely to sell goods and services and to earn a profit. No such company can any longer take for granted even the right to be in business, because that right could be withdrawn any time such action seemed desirable to enough people.

In the words of a former chairman of Mobil, "No business is truly safe unless it serves its customers better than they could serve themselves, persuades them that it is doing so, and retains their goodwill in the process. One can't be too sure how long corporations would retain their present opportunities to operate at a profit if making money were their sole contribution to society."

Mobil tries to be a good employer, a good supplier, a good customer, a good investment, and a socially conscious organization. We try also to be responsive to the aspirations and legitimate needs of minorities and others of the disadvantaged, to environmental problems, and to a host of other concerns. And we would not argue that this is undiluted altruism.

Clearly, however, a corporation labors under severe handicaps in trying to establish itself as a good citizen. The criteria are frequently hazy and subject to sharp differences of opinion among contending groups. There are, and probably always will be, those who find something sinister in the very existence of a large corporation—particularly, we suppose, a large oil company.

Many people view the modern corporation as a glorified slot machine created and operated by glassy-eyed, flint-hearted bankers, lawyers, and technocrats. All this quite naturally plays into the hands of political demagogues, who realize that relatively few of the general public have the information necessary to make value judgments where complex issues of economics and technology are involved.

Since many politicians' concept of infinity extends only to the next election, it is probably unrealistic to expect them to behave otherwise. But this compounds the problems of more-responsible politicians and of businesses that are laboring to persuade the public by concrete example that they are fair, conscientious, public-spirited, and socially desirable.

This is not to argue that all businesses—or any of them, for that matter—are perfect. Far from it. But the individuals who run businesses did not resign from the human race when they became corporate managers. And the individuals who devote themselves in such large measure to denouncing our industrial civilization do not thereby acquire halos. We all have our frailties.

Having said that, we have to add that we are mystified that so many of our critics can forget that we have to breathe the same air they breathe, drink the same water they drink, live in the same towns and cities they live in, enjoy the same beaches they enjoy, and exist in the same society in which they exist. How could we possibly be oblivious to the quality of life or to the aspirations of an upwardly mobile society?

We think the public is ill-served by a situation in which private business and its critics find themselves in a running battle of charge and counter-charge. In our view, our country needs and is entitled to a calmer, more constructive dialogue to delineate more sharply the most productive relationship between business and society. That way, we believe, lies the best hope for the future.

Mobil

©1978 Mobil Corporation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Vietnam: New Light on the Question of American Guilt

Guenter Lewy

UNDER *Executive Orders 10501 and 10816 promulgated by President Eisenhower, and Executive Order 11652 issued by President Nixon on March 8, 1972, the secretaries of the military services have discretionary authority to allow access to classified defense information to qualified researchers from outside the executive department. This essay is the first analysis of the war in Vietnam to make use of these classified records of the U.S. Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps—after-action reports of military operations, command directives, field reports and staff studies of the pacification effort and the Phoenix program, intelligence reports, investigations of war crimes, and the like. Not intended for public consumption, these documents throw important new light on aspects of the war that until now have largely been kept out of public view.*

GUENTER LEWY *teaches political science at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst and is the author of* The Catholic Church and Nazi Germany *and* Religion and Revolution. *The present essay will appear, in somewhat different form, in Mr. Lewy's new book,* America in Vietnam, *to be published later this year by Oxford University Press. In addition to containing a fuller discussion of the issues taken up here, the book also provides the first systematic analysis of the course of the war, the reasons for the failure of American strategy and tactics, the travail of Vietnamization, and the causes of the final collapse of South Vietnam. Scholars interested in the archival location of documentary materials on which the present essay is based, or in bibliographical information on other works cited by Mr. Lewy, will find the references in* America in Vietnam.

TO LARGE numbers of Americans, the defeat of their country's arms in Vietnam not only represents a deserved national humiliation in an ill-advised foreign involvement, and not only proves the political and military ineptitude of those who waged the war, but also constitutes just retribution for what amounts to a moral outrage. This view of the American record in Vietnam is by now very widely accepted, especially among younger people, for whom the American role in Vietnam appears to stand as the epitome of evil in the modern world.

I have just spent five years studying the record, including classified documents not previously examined by any outside researchers. My conclusion is that while the charges of American political and military ineptitude in Vietnam can be sustained by all the available evidence, and while the question of the overall prudence or justice of the American involvement is not easily resolved, the charges of officially condoned crimes and grossly immoral conduct are without substance. It is to this last class of issues that I address myself here.

Every war has its share of atrocities, and Vietnam was no exception. Every war also causes large-scale death and suffering to the civilian population on whose territory it is fought. But the horrors and outrages inherent in war are often ignored when the fighting is crowned with success and when the conflict is seen as morally justified. Thus, despite the fact that the Allies in World War II engaged in terror bombing of the enemy's civilian population, and generally paid only minimal attention to the prevention of civilian casualties, scarcely anyone on the Allied side objected. The war against Nazism and fascism was regarded as a crusade in which the Allies could do no wrong, and the fact that it ended in victory further vindicated the use of means that were questionable on both legal and moral grounds.

The Vietnam war, on the other hand, dragged on for years without a real decision, and it was never perceived as a clear-cut struggle between good and evil—unless it was they who were good and we who were evil. And this indeed is how the conflict was seen by many: a heroic underdog fighting the world's strongest and best-equipped military power. Moreover, on the Allied side the war took place in a fish bowl (the Communists barred all observers except those known to be supportive of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their cause). Every mistake, failure, or misdeed was sooner or later exposed to view, and was widely reported by journalists who were generally critical of the American and South Vietnamese effort. On the other hand, the numerous violations of the law of war and of standards of human decency on the part of the Vietcong (VC) received only sporadic attention and were often rationalized as the justified tactics of resistance fighters battling an oppressive regime and its foreign helpers.

Thus, a situation gradually developed in which the Americans and the South Vietnamese could do hardly anything right. The Communists made skillful use of their worldwide propaganda apparatus to disseminate charges of American war crimes, and they found many Western intellectuals only too willing to accept at face value every conceivable allegation of wrongdoing. Repeated unceasingly, these accusations—no matter how flimsy the evidence for them—eventually came to be widely believed. Among rational people, claimed Noam Chomsky, it was not in dispute that the "United States command is responsible for major crimes in the layman's sense of this term." "The fact is," declared the Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars, "that U.S. war crimes are an accepted and regularly used method of waging war in Indochina."

There soon emerged a veritable industry publicizing alleged war crimes. American servicemen stepped forward with articles and books based on their experience in Vietnam, and became star witnesses before self-appointed bodies like the International War Crimes Tribunal organized by Bertrand Russell. These proceedings condemned as criminal such American actions as the relocation of population and the creation of free-fire zones, the use of napalm and herbicides, and the treatment of prisoners; they also indicted and convicted the American military for committing atrocities, and for the indiscriminate killing of civilians through bombing and other tactics amounting ultimately to genocide.

Basing myself on a wider range of evidence than has been available till now, I will in the pages that follow deal with these charges one at a time in terms of the international law of war, which aims at mitigating the ravages and cruelties of armed conflict and seeks to impose minimum standards of humane and civilized behavior upon the savagery of combat.

Population Relocations and Free-Fire Zones

THROUGHOUT the war, but especially during the years 1966-70, the U.S. and the government of South Vietnam (GVN) engaged in extensive relocations of population, clearing areas of civilians and making them free-fire zones (after December 1965 known as specified strike zones—SSZ).

"One of the most flagrant violations of civilian rights is the forcible relocation of large units of people, in specific violation of Article 49 of the [Geneva] Civilians Convention of 1949, an article framed to avert repetition of the forcible relocations that took place in World War II." This was the finding in 1967 of a group of well-known American theologians, including Martin Luther King, Jr., Harvey G. Cox, Robert F. Drinan, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Martin E. Marty, and others. It appears, however, that these religious figures were mistaken in their interpretation of the law. Strictly speaking, there is a serious question as to whether Article 49 even applies to the hostilities in Vietnam. But if we stipulate that it does, we have to conclude that it not only *allows* the evacuation of civilians from a combat zone, but can be read to impose a *duty* of carrying out such relocations.

Relevant parts of Article 49 read as follows:

> Individual or mass forcible transfers, as well as deportations of protected persons from occupied territory to the territory of the Occupying Power or to that of any other country occupied or not, are prohibited, regardless of their motive.
>
> Nevertheless, the Occupying Power may undertake total or partial evacuation of a given area if the security of the population or imperative military reasons so demand. . . . Persons thus evacuated shall be transferred back to their homes as soon as hostilities in the area in question have ceased.
>
> The Occupying Power undertaking such transfers or evacuations shall ensure, to the greatest practicable extent, that proper accommodation is provided to receive the protected persons, that the removals are effected in satisfactory conditions of hygiene, health, safety, and nutrition, and that members of the same family are not separated.

The references to "Occupying Power" show that one of the main intents of this article is to prevent the deportation of people for purposes of subjecting them to forced labor—as the Germans did in World War II. The U.S. in Vietnam was not an occupying power but a co-belligerent, there with the approval of the government of South Vietnam. But even if we were to regard the U.S. as an occupying power, Article 49 specifically recognizes that "the Occupying Power may undertake total or partial evacuation of a given area if the security of the population or imperative military reasons so demand." It is certainly reasonable to suggest that the relocations carried out in Vietnam qualified on both of these counts.

While it is true that the American command was not merely unselfishly concerned with the "security of the population"—in the sense of protecting people against harm—but also sought to enhance the efficacy of its firepower, nevertheless the relocation of civilians did in fact provide the population with greater security than if it had remained in the combat zone. Conditions in the refugee camps were generally dismal, but the state of hygiene, health, and nutrition was on the whole in line with the local standard of living and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with what one could expect in a wartime situation. Efforts were made to return evacuees to their homes as soon as hostilities ceased. (Some of the relocations of Montagnards carried out by the South Vietnamese probably did not live up to the standards laid down in Article 49, but a country's authority to move its *own* inhabitants is surely not covered by the Geneva conventions.)

As FOR "imperative military reasons," the principle of military necessity allows a belligerent to take all measures not forbidden by international law that are necessary for the defeat of the opponent in the least possible time and at the least cost to himself. In the light of this principle, the relocation of Vietnamese civilians in order to deprive the VC of support does not seem an unreasonable act. An eminent British juridical authority, Hersh Lauterpacht, even grants an occupying power the right to "general devastation" in cases "when, after the defeat of his main forces and occupation of his territory, an enemy disperses his remaining forces into small bands which carry on guerrilla tactics and receive food and information, so that there is no hope of ending the war except by general devastation which cuts the supplies of every kind from the guerrilla bands."

It is clear that the American command, however mistaken its judgment, really believed that forcible relocation of the civilian population would hasten the end of the war and was the most effective way of depriving the VC of supplies and manpower—the water in which they swam. The question as to what in such a situation constitutes "imperative military reasons" must be answered not by hindsight but in terms of what the military commanders at the time believed to be militarily necessary. As the Nuremberg tribunal ruled in the *Hostages* case: "It is our considered opinion that the conditions, as they appeared to the defendant at the time, were sufficient upon which he could honestly conclude that urgent military necessity warranted the decision made. This being true, the defendant may have erred in the exercise of his judgment, but he was guilty of no criminal act."

There is other evidence pointing toward a duty to remove civilians from a combat zone. In 1956, the International Committee of the Red Cross proposed that belligerents be required "to protect the civilian population subject to their authority from the dangers to which they would be exposed in an attack—in particular by removing them from the vicinity of military objectives and from the threatened areas." In 1970, the Secretary General of the United Nations argued, similarly, that civilians would be best protected if they did not remain in areas of danger, and he urged that the General Assembly "consider the usefulness of an appropriate resolution—a call on all authorities involved in armed conflicts of all types to do their utmost to insure that civilians are removed from, or kept out of, areas where conditions would be likely to place them in jeopardy or expose them to the hazards of warfare."

Unhappy with life in the refugee camps, or out of sympathy with the Vietcong, many villagers drifted back into or remained in areas declared SSZ's. Hence, when allied troops carried out ground operations or air strikes in these zones, there were civilians in them who were killed or wounded. However terrible on humanitarian grounds, and however counterproductive from the political point of view, these civilian casualties do not appear to raise an issue of criminal liability so long as adequate notice was given that an area was being designated an SSZ. Applicable rules of engagement did require such notice—after February 1969, a minimum of 72 hours notification in advance. If individual officers occasionally violated these rules, as they undoubtedly did, this was not authorized practice but a transgression of military regulations. Nor can the American command be held responsible for those instances in which the VC forcibly prevented villagers from leaving areas under their control. Lastly, while the Americans for a short time counted the large number of refugees as a political bonus (they later realized that refugees were a heavy liability), there existed no directives by the American command specifically authorizing the generating of refugees.

Bombardment and Destruction of Populated Areas

IT IS incontrovertible that the allied military effort in Vietnam was characterized by the lavish use of firepower and caused much destruction and death. From this, many critics of American policy in Vietnam have concluded that American combat practices violated the law of war and that the U.S. was therefore guilty of war crimes. U.S. battlefield tactics, charged Richard A. Falk of Princeton University in 1971, involved "the massive use of cruel tactics directed indiscriminately against the civilian population in flagrant violation of the minimum rules of war."

An analysis of the applicable law of war suggests a different conclusion. It should be recognized, first, that the VC's practice of "clutching the people to their breast" and of converting hamlets into fortified strongholds was one of the main reasons for the occurrence of combat in populated areas. The existing law of war was not written to encompass this kind of warfare; to the extent that it does apply to insurgency warfare, it prohibits such tactics, for it seeks to achieve maximum distinction between combatants and innocent civilians. According to the Geneva convention of 1949, resistance fighters must carry arms openly and have "a fixed, distinctive sign recognizable at a distance"; the civilian population may not be used as a shield—"the presence of a protected person may not be used to render

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

certain points or areas immune from military operations." Whether the VC were justified in disregarding these internationally accepted legal norms, as some writers have maintained, is an arguable question. The fact remains that by carrying the war into the hamlets and by failing properly to identify their combatants, the VC exposed the civilian population to grave harm.

The Fourth Hague Convention (1907) prohibits "the attack or bombardment, by whatever means, of towns, villages, dwellings, or buildings which are undefended." "Firing on localities which are undefended and without military significance," stated a 1966 directive of the American command in Vietnam, "is a war crime." Yet according to the general practice of states, once a village or town is occupied by a military force, or is fortified, it becomes a defended place and is subject to attack. The same holds true for civilian homes used to store war materiel. Such places become legitimate military objectives, and injuries suffered by the civilian population are considered incidental and unavoidable. Indeed, as the Geneva convention acknowledges, even hospitals lose their immunity if "they are used to commit, outside their humanitarian duties, acts harmful to the enemy," and if due warning has been given to cease such use. One can question the wisdom of attacking the VC once they had holed up in a hamlet—such a response might well be counterproductive in a counterinsurgency setting—but the practice was surely not a violation of the law of war.

IN ATTACKING a defended place, did American forces observe the rule of proportionality? The U.S. Army's Law of Land Warfare (1956) lays down that "loss of life and damage to property must not be out of proportion to the military advantage to be gained." In the context of Vietnam, this meant, for example, that an American unit drawing a single sniper shot from a village was not justified in obliterating the entire village with artillery and air strikes. But what if there were five snipers blocking an important bridge situated in a hamlet? How could a commander make a precise estimate of the size of the enemy unit that was firing upon his men? One sniper using an automatic weapon could sound like a platoon. These were the sorts of difficult situations faced by American officers in Vietnam who, as always in combat, had to act on incomplete information.

There is no question that some military men panicked and overreacted to provocation. But, as with the policy of relocation, the question of whether a certain action was justified by military necessity must be decided in terms of the way a commander judged the specific circumstances of the situation at the time. "If the facts were such," declared the Nuremberg tribunal in the *Hostages* case, "as would justify the action by the exercise of judgment, after giving consideration to all the factors and existing possibilities, even though the conclusion reached may have been faulty, it cannot be said to be criminal." If a commander in Vietnam employed artillery and air strikes against a village—whether because he overestimated the size of the enemy force or because he sought to avoid excessive casualties to his own men—and his action resulted in the loss of civilian life, he may have damaged the effort to win the political support of the people of the South, but his action was probably not illegal.

Another source of confusion in judging the issue of civilian casualties was the designation by many critics of all villagers as innocent civilians. Yet we know that on occasion in Vietnam, women and children set mines and booby traps in place, and that villagers of all ages and sexes, willingly or under duress, served as porters, built fortifications, or engaged in other acts helping the Communist armed forces. It is well established under the laws of war that once civilians act as support personnel, they cease to be noncombatants and are subject to attack. Of course, allied troops had no way of knowing how many dead persons found after battle in a defended hamlet were VC or VC helpers and how many were innocent civilians. Here again we see the terrible consequence of the fact that the VC chose to fight from within villages and hamlets which provided useful cover, avenues of escape, and a source of labor for the building of fortifications. Inevitably the civilian population was involved in the fighting.

The Geneva convention forbids the destruction of personal property "except where such destruction is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations." It does allow the destruction of fortifications. Since the VC often built their trenches, bunkers, and escape tunnels right in the middle of hamlets—if not in, around, and underneath huts and houses—the destruction of fortifications usually amounted to the destruction of homes or even entire hamlets. This is what happened in the widely publicized case of Cam Ne (4) in 1965 as well as in numerous other instances, and critics soon began accusing U.S. forces of conducting a scorched-earth policy. In response to one such complaint, involving the burning of two villages in Binh Dinh province, the Army's Assistant Judge Advocate General explained that "the two Vietnamese villages were not burned as a reprisal for the hostile fire that came from the houses in the village. They were destroyed because the houses and tunnel networks connecting them constituted enemy fortified positions." There undoubtedly were many cases where houses were destroyed without compelling justification: in practice it was often difficult to distinguish an enemy bunker, constructed right under a hut, from a shelter built by a villager for his protection. Once again, we are dealing here with incidents that were a consequence of the war-fighting methods of the VC and not of the Americans.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Napalm

THE Fourth Hague Convention forbids the employment of "arms, projectiles, or material calculated to cause unnecessary suffering," and the American Law of Land Warfare accepts this prohibition. The rule is an expression of the general principles of proportionality and humanity which reflect the intent of the law of war to avoid needless suffering. Yet in practice states have drawn the line between necessary and unnecessary suffering in a way hardly suggested by the humanitarian spirit of the Hague convention. The criterion has normally been whether a weapon inflicts suffering disproportionate to the military advantage to be gained by its use, and this has meant that no militarily decisive and effective weapon has ever been regarded as causing "unnecessary suffering." Suggestions that humanitarian factors such as the nature of the injury, long-term medical effects, the risk of death, etc., be given greater weight have so far not been accepted, and the test has remained that of actual practice. According to the U.S. Law of Land Warfare: "What weapons cause 'unnecessary injury' can only be determined in light of the practice of states in refraining from the use of a given weapon because it is believed to have that effect."

Fire as a weapon of war has a long history. In this century, petroleum fuels have been used in flamethrowers, bombs, shells, and mines, but it was the discovery of the thickener napalm in World War II that greatly increased the effectiveness of incendiary weapons, especially against equipment and fortified positions. It is estimated that during World War II, about 14,000 tons of napalm bombs were used, two-thirds of them in the Pacific area; in the Korean war, the U.S. Far East Air Force dropped a total of 32,557 tons of napalm. But the most extensive reliance on incendiary weapons took place in Indochina. Napalm bombs there constituted about 10 per cent of all fighter-bomber munitions, reaching an estimated total of close to 400,000 tons during the course of the war.

Incendiary munitions proved particularly important against enemy forces holed up in caves, bunkers, and tunnel complexes, and against targets in such close proximity to allied troops that high-explosive fragmentation bombs could not be employed. The American command's rules of engagement provided that in attacks on villages and hamlets, "the use of incendiary-type ammunition will be avoided unless absolutely necessary in the accomplishment of the commander's mission," but in practice this rule does not appear to have restricted the use of such weapons. A Marine captain told the House Armed Services Committee in September 1965 that napalm at first was denied in some instances, but "now we can have napalm whenever we want it." Air strikes with napalm bombs are indeed mentioned routinely in most after-action reports. Also, during Operation Cedar Falls in January 1967, flamethrowers were employed "to assist in the capture of VC located in bunkers and tunnels. The flamethrowers reduced the amount of oxygen in the tunnels, to say nothing of producing a significantly adverse psychological effect on the enemy."

Protests against incendiary weapons were heard early in the war. Critics charged that napalm was being used indiscriminately against civilian targets, and they argued that it was an illegal weapon because it maximized suffering by killing its victims slowly and maiming permanently. In January 1967, *Ramparts* magazine published an article which included large color photographs of burned children; the author stated that he personally had seen thousands of infants and small children burned by napalm in Vietnamese hospitals. The International Commission of Inquiry into U.S. Crimes in Indochina, meeting in Oslo in 1971, concluded that napalm and phosphorus bombs constituted a prohibited method of warfare because they were "designed to cause 'unnecessary suffering' as defined in Article 23 of the Fourth Hague Convention of 1907." During the fighting near An Loc in the spring of 1972, a little girl was hit by napalm; the picture of this naked child running in terror along a road shocked the world.

THERE is no question that incendiary munitions in Vietnam caused civilian casualties, including children. But there is also no question that the impression created by America's critics of many thousands of villagers and children being burned by napalm was false. In the spring of 1967, a team of physicians representing the Committee of Responsibility to Save War-Burned and War-Injured Vietnamese Children (COR) visited 35 of the 45 government hospitals in South Vietnam and reported 105 burn victims, 29 of whom were children. Thirty-eight of these 105 burns were war-caused; the rest were so-called household burns. The total number of war-burned children seen was 16.

Another medical team, organized by the Agency for International Development (AID), visited Vietnamese hospitals in the summer of 1967 at the suggestion of President Johnson, and found a similar situation: "Throughout our visit, individual teams paid particular attention to burns. The cases were relatively limited in number in relation to other injuries and illnesses, and we saw no justification for the undue emphasis which had been placed by the press upon civilian burns caused by napalm." In a separate account, Dr. John H. Knowles of the Massachusetts General Hospital, a member of the AID-sponsored team, wrote that, in all, "burns due to napalm are very few and far between. . . ."

Both medical teams agreed that the majority of burns were due to the explosion of gasoline used in lanterns and for cooking as well as from the spillage of hot boiling water from rice pots.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Other observers on the scene, including non-American physicians who worked as volunteers in Vietnamese hospitals, have confirmed this finding. An Australian doctor reported in 1968 that exploding petrol lanterns were "probably a more frequent cause of serious burns in Vietnam than napalm or white phosphorus," and the wife of an English doctor who served on a medical team at Saigon Children's Hospital wrote that they looked for positive evidence of napalm burns "without seeing a case about which we could be certain. Most of the burns had been caused by domestic accidents. . . ." A radio campaign to alert the Vietnamese to the danger involved in using mixtures containing highly combustible jet fuel had had some success by 1973, though accidents continued to happen. Two fires in refugee camps, which resulted in loss of life, were traced to this source.

Another cause of burn wounds which received even less attention outside Vietnam was the use of napalm-fueled Russian-made flamethrowers by the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese. One incident that did receive publicity because of the scope and enormity of the atrocity was the attack in December 1967 on the Montagnard hamlet of Dak Son in Phuoc Long province, some 75 miles northeast of Saigon, which contained a large number of refugees. Seeking to drive home the point that the South Vietnamese government could not protect refugees, some 600 Vietcong, armed with an estimated 60 flamethrowers, attacked the hamlet at midnight. The ensuing massacre left 252 of the Montagnards dead and nearly 50 wounded, 33 of them with severe burns.

The fact that hospitals in Vietnam had relatively few civilian patients with napalm-caused burn wounds does not in and of itself prove that few civilians were hurt by napalm. Medical studies have shown that napalm burns are deep and that mortality from respiratory embarrassment, shock, fluid loss, and sepsis is high in proportion to the total body surface area involved, especially in the case of children. According to some observers, this meant that under wartime conditions relatively few napalm burn victims were able to reach a hospital alive or, if they did reach medical help, they died soon after admission. In conformity with Vietnamese custom, moreover, many moribund patients were taken by their relatives to die at home. Napalm, wrote the leader of an Australian surgical team which spent three months in 1967 in a Vietnamese hospital, is "an all-or-nothing weapon, and just as it was not usual to be called upon to treat bayonet wounds in World War I or II, . . . it is rare to see napalm burns; in 3 months we did not encounter a single instance." But the evidence for napalm's unusually high mortality rate is fragmentary and inconclusive.

There is general agreement that while many patients with third-degree burns will die without feeling much pain, those who survive or those with less severe burns will experience excruciating pain over a long period of time. But it is questionable whether the suffering caused by incendiary weapons is worse than that resulting from the crush and blast effects of high explosives, and even more doubtful is the claim that this suffering is disproportionate to the military advantage derived from the use of such weapons. Because these munitions are grimly effective against underground bunkers and fortified positions, and because their area of effectiveness is more limited than that of high explosives, they are not easily replaceable by other weapons. The consensus of legal opinion, therefore, is that as the law of war stands today, incendiary weapons employed against targets necessitating their use do not violate Article 23 of the Fourth Hague Convention. The actual practice of states in relying on flamethrowers and firebombs in most military conflicts since World War I further demonstrates that no customary rule of international law exists which forbids resort to these weapons.

Defoliation and Crop Destruction

In October 1962, the first large-scale defoliation mission was flown by American planes against some 8,000 acres of mangrove forest along rivers and canals in the Ca Mau peninsula, a long-time VC stronghold in the southern tip of South Vietnam. The first crop-destruction mission carried out by South Vietnamese personnel and helicopters was undertaken on November 21, 1962.

Once approved in principle, both defoliation and crop-destruction programs quickly escalated, reaching a high point in 1967. Between 1965 and 1971, 3.2 per cent of South Vietnam's cultivated land and 46.4 per cent of the total forest area were sprayed one or more times. Most of these areas were very thinly populated. Only about 3 per cent of the population lived in defoliated areas, and less than 1 per cent in areas where crops were destroyed. According to the guidelines laid down by the Department of Defense, crop destruction was limited to VC-controlled territory in I, II, and III Corps, "where food is scarce and where denial of food would create an operational burden on the enemy." Special care was to be taken to prevent damage to rubber and fruit trees. The entire herbicide program was formally directed by the South Vietnamese government; U.S. personnel assisted in the selection of targets, planning, and evaluation. A special Air Force unit flew light (C-123) planes with spraying equipment in what was known as Operation Ranch Hand. Aircraft participating in the crop-destruction program had to be flown under the so-called Farmgate rules which required Vietnamese markings and a Vietnamese observer aboard.

Approximately 90 per cent of the total herbicide effort was devoted to defoliation. Carried out along roads and canals, with emphasis on ambush sites and tax-collection points, and in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

jungle terrain, defoliation was held to be effective in improving aerial observation and inhibiting enemy movement during daylight hours. It also improved the defense of base perimeters by opening fields of fire and facilitating observation from outposts. The crop-destruction program, on the other hand, drew a more mixed evaluation. Given the close relationship between the VC and the rural population, the major portion of the crops destroyed through aerial spraying was inevitably civilian-owned and cultivated. The chief sufferers when crops were destroyed were the local people, because the VC compensated for their own losses by confiscating more food.

The question whether the crops destroyed belonged to the civilian population or were grown solely for the enemy's armed forces is significant in assessing the legality of herbicide operations. There exists general agreement that enemy forces may be deprived of food and water in order to compel them to surrender. But when measures are taken to render stocks of food and water unusable, this intent should be evident to the enemy to avoid offending Article 23(a) of the Fourth Hague Convention which forbids employment of "poison or poisoned weapons" and which thus prohibits the deliberate contamination of food and water actually consumed by the enemy.

American belief in the legality of the chemical destruction of crops used by enemy forces was based on a memorandum prepared in March 1945 by Major General Myron C. Cramer, then Judge Advocate General, concerning the possible use of chemical anti-crop agents against pockets of Japanese on the Pacific islands. Cramer argued that the use of chemical agents to destroy cultivations or retard their growth would not violate international law, provided "that such chemicals do not produce poisonous effects upon enemy personnel, either from direct contact, or indirectly from ingestion of plants and vegetables which have been exposed thereto." Following this interpretation, the Army's manual of land warfare states that the general proscription of poison and poisoned weapons "does not prohibit measures being taken to dry up springs, to divert rivers and aqueducts from their courses, or to destroy, through chemical or bacterial agents harmless to man, crops intended solely for consumption by the armed forces (if that fact can be determined)." But in Vietnam it was impossible to establish with certainty that the crops to be destroyed were intended solely for the enemy's armed forces.

In such situations, crop destruction can still be lawful if it is demanded by the necessities of war and if the extent of destruction is not disproportionate to the military advantage gained. The property of noncombatants in a war zone does not enjoy complete immunity from attack, and the humanitarian principle that noncombatants should not be deprived of food is similarly not absolute. Thus, it is considered legal to prevent noncombatants from leaving a besieged place in order to worsen the logistical burden of the defenders and hasten their surrender. The 1949 Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War requires the passage of "essential foodstuffs . . . intended for children under fifteen, expectant mothers, and maternity cases," subject to the condition that there exist no serious grounds for fearing "that the consignments may be diverted from their destination" or will cause a definite advantage to the enemy's military efforts or economy. While the application of some of these provisions to the hostilities in South Vietnam is problematic, they do show that civilians may in certain circumstances be deprived of food.

THEN there is the question of whether herbicides used for defoliation and crop destruction had poisonous effects upon humans and therefore violated the Fourth Hague Convention. This was the charge made by Communist propaganda from the time herbicides were first employed in Vietnam in 1962.

In America itself, criticism of the use of herbicides was at first limited to concern for the ecology of South Vietnam, and did not endorse Communist charges of poisonous effects on humans. The first intimation of possible harm to man came when a study by the Bionetic Research Laboratories of selected pesticides and industrial chemicals used in the U.S. reported teratogenic effects (malformations) in test animals caused by 2,4,5-T, a component of Agent Orange (named for the color markings on its shipping container), the principal herbicide used in Vietnam. This study, undertaken during the period of 1965-68 and then filed and forgotten, was accidentally found in an office of the Food and Drug Administration in the summer of 1969, and when brought to the attention of the White House led to an announcement on October 29, 1969 that the use of 2,4,5-T was being partially curtailed. When other studies confirmed the teratogenic effects of 2,4,5-T, the Department of Defense began to reduce the scope of the herbicide program. On March 11, 1970, it was announced that all defoliation operations in Vietnam were being reduced by 25 per cent, and on April 15, 1970, the use of Agent Orange was suspended pending a review. At the same time, the Department of Agriculture announced a ban on the domestic use of 2,4,5-T except along rights-of-way and in remote forest and range areas.

The suspension of Agent Orange resulted in a further decrease of herbicide operations. Because of a shortage of Agent Blue, the other commonly used herbicide in Vietnam, two brigades of the Americal Division in the summer of 1970 continued to use Agent Orange for crop destruction in violation of the suspension order. A subsequent investigation by the Inspector General revealed that brigade and division commanders had falsified reports to hide this practice. Disciplinary action was taken against the officers involved, and remaining stocks of Agent Orange were put under

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stringent control. Both defoliation and crop destruction were phased out completely by June 30, 1971.

Meanwhile, reports were coming out of Vietnam of an increase in the number of stillbirths and birth defects among Vietnamese exposed to herbicide operations. In 1969, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) appointed a Herbicide Assessment Commission headed by Professor Matthew Meselson of Harvard University. The commission spent months in preparatory study and in the summer of 1970 went on an inspection tour of about six weeks in South Vietnam. In its report to the AAAS in December 1970, the commission stated that it found no evidence of sudden or new appearance of congenital abnormalities, but added that inadequate health statistics and wartime conditions made any firm conclusions impossible.

In October 1970, Congress ordered the Secretary of Defense to contract with the National Academy of Science (NAS) for a full study of herbicide operations in Vietnam. This assignment was undertaken by a committee headed by Dr. Anton Lang, director of the MSU/AEC Plant Research Laboratory, and a lengthy report was completed by January 1974. The committee had received reports of serious illness and death allegedly caused by herbicide operations, especially among children of the Montagnard people heavily affected by the crop-destruction program, but it could not visit the central highland and concluded that, in the absence of medical studies of the exposed populations, these reports could be neither confirmed nor refuted. With regard to congenital malformations, the committee studied the records of several hospitals but could find no conclusive evidence of an association between herbicides and birth defects. The committee recommended further studies of the effects of dioxin, an ingredient of Agent Orange known to have teratogenic effects in mice and rats, which could be found in the Vietnamese food chain.

As of now, therefore, we have no firm scientific evidence of any direct damage to human health caused by herbicides. The reported increase in the incidence of birth defects may simply be a result of the fact that in the late 1960's more people in Vietnam were receiving medical care, which would lead to greater reporting of such cases. The damage to the ecology of South Vietnam has no doubt been substantial, though the NAS study shows that the fertility of the soil has not suffered any permanent damage and the loss of timber stocks has also been somewhat less than was originally feared. The charge of "ecocide" has been a politically effective slogan, though its precise meaning is not clear and no evidence whatever of any lasting damage to the economic sustenance of South Vietnam has so far been produced. In any event, the issue of ecological damage is irrelevant to the question of whether herbicides violate the Hague convention, which is concerned only with the effect of weapons upon humans. In a situation where defoliation could prevent casualties, the preoccupation of the critics with environmental issues also demonstrates a certain callousness and indifference to the value of human life.

It is possible to argue that the military should have been more alert and sensitive to the possible biological consequences of herbicide operations, but it must be remembered that the herbicides in question had been used worldwide for the control of weeds and unwanted vegetation without causing serious hazards. The record of the military in this respect is probably no worse than that of civilian authorities with regard to various domestically used pesticides and herbicides. As mentioned above, soon after serious questions about the teratogenic effects of Agent Orange were raised, its use was suspended, and the entire herbicide effort was finally halted. The charge of a deliberate violation of article 23(a) of the Fourth Hague Convention, forbidding the employment of poison or poisoned weapons, would therefore appear to be baseless.

ANOTHER legal challenge to herbicides in war has been based on the Geneva Gas Protocol of 1925 which forbids, in addition to poisonous gases, "all analogous liquids, materials, or devices" and "bacteriological methods of warfare." Even though the U.S. at the time of the war in Vietnam was not a party to this treaty, it has been argued that the treaty had become declaratory of customary law and therefore was binding on all states irrespective of their adherence to the protocol. But there is some question whether the Geneva protocol really applies to herbicides, for both the text and the legislative history are ambiguous on this point. The State Department in 1969 took the position that the U.S., although not a party to the agreement, was "pledged to observe strictly the principles and objectives of the protocol," but that chemical anti-plant agents like those used domestically in many countries, unlike living organisms causing plant diseases, were not prohibited by the protocol. Moreover, even if the protocol is held to outlaw herbicides, it is not at all clear that the use of such weapons has been absorbed in customary law. The fact that little resort has so far been made to them is not in itself decisive. The international lawyers Ann van Wynen Thomas and A.J. Thomas, Jr., therefore conclude: "The split of authority among reputable international jurists makes evidence of the existence of a customary rule doubtful, and, if it is in existence, evidence of its extent equivocal."

On November 25, 1969, President Nixon renounced the first use of lethal or incapacitating chemical agents and of all methods of biological warfare. The renunciation did not include herbicides. A treaty prohibiting the development, production, and stockpiling of bacteriological (bio-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

logical) weapons was signed on April 10, 1972 in Washington, Moscow, and London, and was submitted to the Senate for approval in August of that year. But the Senate Foreign Relations Committee delayed action, because it sought first a resolution of the riot-control and herbicide questions involved in the Geneva protocol. By 1974, the Ford administration was prepared to yield on these two issues and agreed to renounce the first use of herbicides in war except for control of vegetation within U.S. bases and installations or around their immediate defensive perimeters. Any use of herbicides in war would have to be approved by the President. Executive Order 11850, issued April 8, 1975, made this renunciation of the first use of herbicides in war national policy. Thus, even though defoliation and crop destruction as practiced in Vietnam did not violate the laws of war, they have now been ruled out as acceptable military tactics by the United States.

Counterinsurgency: The Phoenix and Emergency-Detention Programs

AMONG the important measures introduced by the new pacification program that began in 1967 was a stepped-up attack on the Vietcong Infrastructure (VCI) in the villages. This was the apparatus—made up of Communist-party, National Liberation Front (NLF), and (after 1969) Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) cadres—which directed the insurgency against the government of South Vietnam. Its members engaged in acts of terrorism, extortion, sabotage, and abduction; they also contributed to the enemy's military operations by recruiting soldiers and collecting taxes and intelligence as well as by providing guides, food, clothing, weapons, medical supplies, and logistical support. As long as this clandestine organization maintained its strength amid the rural population, the victories scored by the allies in the war against Vietcong and North Vietnamese main-force units were in large part irrelevant. The belated realization of the importance of destroying this politico-military apparatus led to the establishment of the Phuong Hoang (Phoenix) program.

In a war not short on misconceptions, misinformation, and deception, the Phoenix program ranks high as a focus of misunderstanding. Despite repeated attempts by American officials to explain its purpose and mode of operation to both the Congress and the American public, the explanations somehow never managed to catch up with sensationalist media reports and the barrage of accusations made by the critics of American policy in Vietnam who called Phoenix an assassination program and an example of the moral depravity of the American involvement. In evaluating these charges, it should be borne in mind that since in the eyes of many of these critics the VC were revolutionaries and fighters for national liberation, the insurgents' use of terror was regarded as a necessary and legitimate tactic, while any concerted action *against* the VC apparatus became, almost by definition, illegitimate and immoral.

The aim of the Phoenix program was to improve the collection of information about the VCI, to identify its members, and to conduct operations leading to their apprehension. It was a Vietnamese program for which, as in the case of all war-related programs mounted by the government of South Vietnam, the U.S. provided advice and financial assistance. Its origin can be traced to the CIA-directed Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation (ICEX) advisory program of 1967, which sought to bring all military and civilian agencies concerned with intelligence into alignment. On July 1, 1968, the South Vietnamese accepted formal responsibility for this program, which was now named Phuong Hoang (translated Phoenix). After January 1, 1969, CIA responsibility was gradually phased out and on July 1, 1969, the program was put under the advisory function of CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support), the agency within the American command coordinating the pacification effort. By 1971, Phoenix had about 600 American military and 40-50 civilian advisers. Most of them served in the District Intelligence and Operation Centers which supervised the collection of information on individual members of the VCI and planned operations against those identified as Vietcong operatives by using appropriate police, military, or paramilitary forces. Those arrested were subject to trial by military courts or to an administrative-detention procedure known as *an tri*.

In earlier years, the pressure on the VCI had been erratic at best. Intelligence was poor, and thanks to corruption those arrested were often released quickly. "There is reason to believe," concluded a CORDS study in December 1967, "that any individual possessing a sufficient amount of cash can purchase his freedom at any level of the penal system in Vietnam." The new procedures sought to improve the accuracy of information about the VCI and to achieve a more effective and consistent handling of Vietcong suspects. The word "neutralize" was applied to the overall goal of destroying the VCI—whether its members were captured or were killed or defected.

THE charge that Phoenix was an assassination program arose because reports always included a considerable number listed as killed. When administration spokesmen explained that these were killed in the course of normal military operations, or police actions, or in fighting off arrest with the use of armed force, their explanations were met with considerable skepticism. The administration could have strengthened its position by introducing other available data on the Phoenix program which showed, for example, that during the 15 months from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

January 1970 to March 1971 less than 6 per cent of those killed were killed as a result of special targeting. The vast majority of VCI killed (9,827 of 10,443) were killed in the course of operations, many of which were not even initiated by government forces, and were only later identified as VCI. The fact that so few of those killed were on the Phoenix target list certainly undermines the charge that Phoenix was a program of planned assassinations. But for the administration to introduce these data would also have demonstrated the weakness of the entire program: relatively few operations were targeted against known members of the VCI because despite a large, organized intelligence effort, the identity and/or whereabouts of most of these men were just not known. The full story, consequently, was withheld, and the result was a further widening of the "credibility gap."

Individuals found to belong or suspected of belonging to the VCI—seized by the police, territorial forces, or in allied military operations—were either tried by military courts or were subject to emergency detention (*an tri*). The need for such an administrative procedure arose from the desire not to have to produce valuable intelligence agents in open court and from the difficulty of obtaining sufficient evidence or finding witnesses who would dare to testify against Vietcong cadres. These problems are encountered in many countries having to deal with terrorist organizations, and the establishment of an administrative emergency-detention program is not unique to Vietnam. Wartime emergencies, moreover, often require protective measures unprovided for in normal peacetime legal procedures; here, too, there are many historical precedents, including in the United States.

In view of the fact that emergency detention generally involves the treatment of civilian persons by their own government, such programs are not regulated by international law. The Geneva Convention for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War applies to persons who "find themselves, in case of a conflict or occupation, in the hands of a Party to the conflict or Occupying Power of which they are not nationals." Hence South Vietnamese civilians detained by the government of South Vietnam were not "protected persons" within the meaning of this convention. The convention also does not apply to persons who are citizens of a co-belligerent state (as was South Vietnam in regard to the U.S.) if the state holding them has normal diplomatic relations with their own government. This means that South Vietnamese civilians, captured or detained by U.S. forces, were similarly not covered by the Geneva convention on civilians. (Captured members of the Vietcong main or local forces were considered prisoners of war and were not subject to the Phoenix or *an tri* programs.)

None of the specific provisions of the 1949 Geneva conventions is applicable to terrorists except that such persons, like all individuals not considered "protected persons," are to be treated humanely—ruling out, presumably, such punishments as shooting without trial. With regard to the VCI, both the Americans and the South Vietnamese accepted as binding Article 3, common to the four Geneva conventions, which prescribes minimum standards of humanitarian treatment to be extended to all individuals not considered "protected persons" within the terms of the conventions. Article 3 prohibits "the passing of sentences . . . without previous judgment by a regularly constituted court," but this provision is generally held to apply only to sentencing for crimes and does not prohibit emergency detention without formal trial as practiced since World War II in Malaya, Kenya, Northern Ireland, and Vietnam. Article 23(b) of the Fourth Hague Convention makes it illegal "to kill or wound treacherously individuals belonging to the hostile nation or army," and this provision has been construed as ruling out assassinations or putting a price on the head of enemy individuals. But the Phoenix program neither involved "individuals belonging to the hostile nation or army" nor did it constitute a program of planned assassinations.

By 1972-73, the *an tri* procedure had become a favorite target of Hanoi's sympathizers. The United States was held at least indirectly responsible for it, and it was also cited as proof of the repressive character of the Thieu regime. But if emergency detention in and of itself is not necessarily an unacceptable violation of individual liberty, it is also necessary to reject the allegation that the South Vietnamese government imprisoned hundreds of thousands of political prisoners. This charge had its origin in Hanoi. On January 18, 1971 the *Vietnam Courier* in Hanoi asserted that South Vietnamese prisoners held over 200,000 South Vietnamese patriots who were dying a slow death there. In the summer of 1973, a Paris-educated Redemptorist priest in Saigon, Father Chan Tin, charged in a mimeographed handout that as of June 1, 1973 the South Vietnamese government was detaining 202,000 prisoners. Chan Tin said that he headed an organization called the Committee to Investigate Mistreatment of Political Prisoners. Western newsmen and Americans visiting Vietnam reported him to be a man deeply concerned with human suffering. In September 1973, some of Hanoi's friends in Washington, operating the Indochina Resource Center, presented Chan Tin's charges and figures to a congressional committee, where they appeared to make an impression. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, it turned out that Chan Tin and several other Catholic priests had been part of the Vietcong underground in Saigon. "They presented themselves as exponents of the Third Force," writes a well-informed European journalist with left-wing political leanings, Tiziano Terzani, who stayed in Saigon after the Communist takeover,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"but in reality they were part of an operation whose purpose was to back up the struggle of the National Liberation Front."

Chan Tin's figure of 202,000 political prisoners was checked in two exhaustive investigations by American embassy officials in Saigon and was found to exceed by far the total prison and detention population in South Vietnam, which in the July-August 1973 period was around 35,000. This figure included all common criminals as well as all *an tri* detainees. The American surveys were based on statistics supplied by the Saigon government to the approximately 200 CORDS public-safety advisers, who were in a good position to check their trustworthiness, as well as on South Vietnamese records meant for internal use, i.e., what the government in Saigon was telling itself on this subject. The broad accuracy of the embassy figures was confirmed after the fall of Saigon. For example, Terzani reports that 7,000 prisoners were freed from the Chi Hoa prison in Saigon; the embassy survey in 1973 had given the number of prisoners there as 7,911.

But the most serious flaw in Chan Tin's charges was his use of the term "political prisoner" applied indiscriminately to all *an tri* detainees. The *an tri* net at times caught innocents, seized to extort a bribe, or anti-Communist oppositionists to Thieu's autocratic rule, but to maintain that all detainees were political prisoners surely was to take unacceptable liberties with the meaning of this term. The friendly neighborhood Communist who planted bombs under civilian buses or assassinated teachers and hamlet chiefs was no more a "political prisoner" when apprehended than Lee Harvey Oswald or Sirhan Sirhan.

The naiveté with which many Americans approached the entire problem was exemplified by the support extended in this country to one of the best-known "political prisoners," Huynh Tan Mam. Supposedly a pacifist and neutralist, he repeatedly participated in and led demonstrations in Saigon protesting the government's war policy and U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia, for which actions he was arrested many times. The *Vietnam Courier* in Hanoi reported happily on February 13, 1971, for example, that at a demonstration held on February 9, a day after the incursion into Laos, "a military vehicle was burned in front of the U.S. embassy" and Huynh Tan Mam denounced the collusion of Thieu and Nixon who were "sending South Vietnamese youth to a senseless death in Laos in place of GI's to the only interests of the U.S. imperialists." It is possible to argue that on the whole the Saigon government could have been more tolerant of political dissent, but it is difficult to deny that leading street demonstrations accompanied by violence constitutes an overt act which a country at war fighting for its life may be legitimately unwilling to allow. On May 1, 1975, a day after the fall of Saigon, Huynh Tan Mam was honored and rewarded for his services to the Communist cause. At the beginning of the first TV broadcast from Saigon celebrating the "liberation" of the capital, the playing of the NLF anthem was followed by a speech by Huynh Tan Mam, with the screen showing a portrait of Ho Chi Minh.

Detention as a VC suspect under the *an tri* procedure, and life in South Vietnamese jails generally, were obviously no picnic. As is the case in most developing nations, the guards were poorly paid and were not paragons of enlightened correctional practice. American financial assistance and American advisers, in the face of heavy odds, gradually improved prison conditions somewhat. Housing, sanitation, medical care, and food were upgraded, and the death rate was reduced substantially. Given all this, it is unlikely that the termination of all public-safety programs in South Vietnam, mandated by Congress in 1973, contributed to the well-being of the inmates of the South Vietnamese correctional system. But Congress was impressed by the horror stories about political prisoners in South Vietnam and was anxious to liquidate all remnants of the American involvement.

Another dubious tale that influenced Congress was that of the prisoners allegedly paralyzed in the "tiger cages" of Con Son. This began with the charge that the South Vietnamese government at its Con Son island prison, a former French penal colony, kept inmates in underground cells which were fit only for caged animals. Congressmen William Anderson and August Hawkins, accompanied by staff aide Thomas Harkin and Don Luce of the World Council of Churches, who came upon these cells during an inspection tour of the prison in July 1970, did not in fact report that they were below ground. But use of the term "pits" by Harkin and the publication of his photographs in *Life* magazine, taken looking down into the cells, created the impression of subterranean, tiny, dark dungeons. The imaginations of other writers soon enlarged upon this initial report. "The tiger cages," wrote Alfred Hassler, director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, in 1970, "are too short for even the small Vietnamese to lie full-length in them, and the ceilings are so low that the inmates can barely stand." In 1973, Sylvan Fox described them in the New York *Times* as "small concrete trenches with bars on top, in which five to seven prisoners were cramped in a space about 5 feet wide, 6 feet long, and 6 feet deep."

In point of fact, the 48 cells were entirely above ground, they had ordinary doors in front, and they measured 6 feet 3 inches in width, 10 feet 6 inches in length, and 10 feet in height. Built by the French in 1941 as punishment cells for unruly prisoners, in 1970 they were still being used for this purpose, usually five prisoners to a cell. This gave each prisoner about 13⅛ square feet of floor space. The distance of 10 feet from the floor to the ceiling bars would have accommodated a standing human giant, and the length of 10 feet

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

6 inches would have enabled him to stretch out as well.

The prisoners in the tiger cages, reported the visiting Congressmen and Don Luce, were unable to stand up and claimed to be paralyzed. "Until a few days ago, they said they had been shackled to a bar that went across one end of the cage. . . . 'We will be shackled again in a few days,' one said as he crawled around the cage using his hands to move himself. One of the prisoners pointed to the scars on his useless legs and said, 'We were shackled here for months.'"

The facts again were somewhat different. The prisoners were shackled between the hours of 5 P.M. and 6 A.M. because the doors to the old cells were no longer strong enough to withstand pressure. As to the claimed paralysis, there is evidence to indicate that this condition was simulated as part of a propaganda scheme. Thus on December 22, 1970, and on January 5-6, 1971, three military neurologists examined 116 of the prisoners who complained of paralysis of the legs. They reported: "All patients had normal musculature without atrophy or fasciculation. . . . All patients had normal ankle and knee deep-tendon reflexes with no pathological reflexes. . . . In addition, patients who complained of total paralysis were observed to move the legs when asked to roll over, slide back on the examination table, or remove clothing." The three physicians concluded: "There is no objective evidence of organic neurological disease at this time." All of these prisoners were offered therapy for their condition; all refused.

Atrocities

THE conflict in Vietnam was a guerrilla war without fronts—a setting especially conducive to atrocities. In such a setting, frustration and anxiety run high, and these give rise in turn to aggressive behavior. This certainly was the experience of American servicemen in Vietnam. Troops would tramp for days in tropical heat through swamps and rice paddies, wade through streams and canals, climb hills and fight dense jungle growth—all without making contact with the evasive foe. Meanwhile, they suffered the deadly depredations of enemy activity—ambushes, snipers, mines, and booby traps. Buddies were killed and maimed, yet there was no enemy in sight on whom to avenge these losses. People who seemed to be civilians were actually combatants; women and children tossed grenades or planted traps. Gradually the entire Vietnamese population became an object of fear and hatred. As a Marine lieutenant told an American doctor: "You walk through the fucking bush for three days and nights without sleep. Watch your men, your buddies, your goddamn kids get booby trapped. Blown apart. Get thrown six feet in the air by a trap laid by an old lady and come down with no legs." Eventually, he said, a soldier concludes that the only thing to do is to "kill them all."

The extent of atrocities committed by American soldiers cannot be established with any precision. Between January 1965 and March 1973, 201 Army personnel in Vietnam were convicted by court-martial of serious offenses against Vietnamese; and during the period from March 1965 to August 1971, 77 Marines were convicted of serious crimes against Vietnamese. These figures encompass both civilian crimes, such as traffic incidents resulting in death or the killing of a bargirl in Saigon, and offenses connected with military operations—the kinds of crimes usually referred to as atrocities or war crimes.

In 1967, a President's commission concluded that about twice as many major crimes are committed in America as are known to the police; similar conclusions have been reached in other countries. There is no reason to assume that the situation was very different with regard to military personnel in Vietnam. Despite many directives requiring the reporting of war crimes and acts causing death, injury, or property damage to noncombatants, it is likely that many such incidents remained unreported.

This does not, however, mean that large-scale massacres of civilians such as the one that occurred at My Lai were common. On the contrary, in view of the openness of the fighting in South Vietnam and the encouragement which the My Lai affair gave to other servicemen to come forward with reports of atrocities, it is highly unlikely that anything like the My Lai massacre did escape detection. Villagers were regularly killed in combat assaults on defended hamlets, but the cold-blooded rounding up and shooting of civilians was an unusual event. The "reported reaction of some of the soldiers at Son My,"* writes Telford Taylor, formerly chief counsel for the prosecution at the Nuremberg trials, "strongly indicates that they regarded it as out of the ordinary." Even Daniel Ellsberg, not known for his reticence in criticizing American actions in Vietnam, rejects the idea that incidents like My Lai happened all the time. "My Lai was beyond the bounds of permissible behavior, and that is recognizable by virtually every soldier in Vietnam. They know it was wrong. . . . The men who were at My Lai knew there were aspects out of the ordinary. That is why they tried to hide the event, talked about it to no one, discussed it very little even among themselves."

ATTEMPTS to develop an accurate picture of the conduct of American troops in Vietnam have not been helped by the sensationalist accounts found in many segments of the media and the generally unsubstantiated charges spread by what I have called the war-crimes industry. The Russell tribunal acted as accuser, juror, and judge all at once; American guilt was assumed

* My Lai was one of four hamlets in the village of Son My.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the start. The tribunal, as Bertrand Russell put it, was convened "in order to expose . . . barbarous crimes . . . reported daily from Vietnam." At other proceedings staged in the U.S., standards of evidence, decorum, and impartiality were no higher.

In early 1970, for example, three young American anti-war activists, including a West Point graduate disillusioned after service in Vietnam, dubbed themselves the National Committee for a Citizens' Commission of Inquiry on U.S. War Crimes in Vietnam (CCI) and organized a series of hearings in various locations across the country at which veterans testified about their personal experiences. In December 1970, they convened a large hearing, lasting three days, in the nation's capital.

Some forty veterans testified in Washington from December 1-3, 1970. Among them, and making his first public appearance, was a former military intelligence officer, Kenneth Barton Osborn, an alleged CIA operative, whom one sympathetic reporter called the inquiry's uncontested superstar. Osborn testified to instances of torture, but he refused to give names of the individuals involved on the ground that he had signed an agreement with the CIA not to reveal the specifics of secret operations. Such agreements, he explained, "are an attempt on the organization's part to cover their ass," but he had decided to adhere to the one he himself had signed "to avoid endangering intelligence operatives who are still active." Several years later, Osborn became an official of the Organizing Committee for a Fifth Estate, the publisher of the magazine *Counterspy,* which freely and frequently exposes CIA operatives. In 1970 he had another reason for not revealing names: "There's no reason to identify them. The thing to do is to attack the thing at its source, which is at the policy-making level." This was in line with the official position of the CCI which, as one of its spokesmen stated at the end of the Washington hearing, sought to show "that war crimes are a way of life in Vietnam; and that they are a logical consequence of our war policies."

The refusal to name names, and thus provide the kind of concrete information that would make possible an official investigation of charges, led at the time to sharp questioning of witnesses by correspondents covering the hearing. For instance, Michael McCusker of the First Marine Division declined to give the name of the commanding officer (CO) of one of the battalions allegedly involved in an atrocity. "The reason for not giving any particular names is once again we're going to lay it back on individuals. And the whole thing for this investigation is to take it away from individuals and not lay the blame back on them and make it as if it were isolated." This led a correspondent to ask: "You're absolving the CO of the battalion as just doing his duty, under standing orders, are you?" McCusker replied: "I'm absolving him as, in essence, the same way I'm absolving myself. That he was just as much a victim of the rigid structure in which he was involved. . . . And he was under orders as I was under orders. And I felt a great sense of powerlessness."

Another time, a spokesman for the inquiry put it this way: "We're not trying to find out who's guilty on an individual basis. If we did that we'd probably have to draw up a list with 2,500,000 names on it. What we're trying to do is find the responsibility for these actions and we say that the responsibility is at the highest levels of planning. That these tactical field policies emanate from these highest levels of planning and create a strain, a type of atmosphere in Vietnam, where these type of actions have to occur on a very frequent basis." That also meant, as an organizer of the CCI argued, that the trial of Lieutenant Calley had to be stopped. "The attempt, I suppose, is basically to . . . take the monkey off the individual's back, take if off Calley's back, and put it a step higher—let the generals do what they will with the monkey once it's on their back."

IT MAY well be that certain "tactical field policies," such as the stress on body count, created an atmosphere conducive to atrocities. Yet despite the pressure for a high enemy casualty toll, most soldiers in Vietnam did not kill prisoners or intentionally shoot unarmed villagers. Such violations of the law of war were committed by individuals acting against existing policy. With the exception of rare cases—themselves subject to legal prosecution—no orders were issued to commit atrocities; and when the plea of superior orders was introduced, as in the Calley case, courts-martial rejected it as a defense for the commission of war crimes.

Like other critics of the American command in Vietnam, the CCI erroneously assumed that the rules of engagement governing combat, with which it was not familiar, were in violation of applicable international law (of which it knew even less), and that individual atrocities therefore were committed in execution of standing orders. This charge is without foundation. Telford Taylor, a critic of many facets of U.S. Vietnam policy, has called the rules of engagement issued by the American command in Vietnam "virtually impeccable." So impeccable were they, indeed, as measured by their encouragement of restraint, that Senator Goldwater, when he obtained several of these directives in 1975, exclaimed in anger: "It is absolutely unbelievable that any Secretary of Defense would ever place such restrictions on our forces. It is unbelievable that any President would have allowed this to happen. . . . I am ashamed of my country . . . for such restrictions to have been placed upon men who were trained to fight. . . ."

The demand that men like Calley should be freed and that no other individual soldiers or officers be brought to trial in effect was a demand that nobody be held responsible for atrocities. It amounted to a repudiation of individual respon-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sibility not unlike that made with regard to the German people after World War II. Yet while collective guilt, like the notion of original sin, may have a place in theology, it is no part of Anglo-American jurisprudence. If all are guilty, then in effect nobody is guilty—perhaps this was indeed the point which veterans relating tales of atrocities wanted to make. To cite again the candid acknowledgment of Michael McCusker: "I'm absolving him [the CO] as, in essence, the same way I'm absolving myself." Another veteran testifying to atrocities admitted that it was less difficult to live with such killings if one could convince oneself that one had been programmed to act in this way. "You know, maybe it wasn't 'GI Joe' who pulled the trigger to kill the baby, but in some very real way, it's the military who has made 'GI Joe' what he was then, who—quite obviously I think we all believe here—bear the responsibility for the act, if not the actual guilt itself."

The truth is that some individuals, under pressure and sometimes provocation, committed atrocities, while the vast majority successfully resisted such pressure and provocation. Rather than face up to the harsh fact of individual moral failure, some found it easier to place "the monkey" on the backs of the generals.

ANOTHER organization active in airing charges of American atrocities in Vietnam was the Vietnam Veterans Against the War (VVAW), which was founded in 1967 and by 1970 was said to have 600 members. From January 31 to February 2, 1971, the VVAW, with financial backing from the actress Jane Fonda, convened a hearing on American atrocities in Vietnam, known as the Winter Soldier Investigation in the city of Detroit. More than 100 veterans and 16 civilians testified at this hearing about "war crimes which they either committed or witnessed"; some had given similar testimony at the CCI inquiry in Washington. The allegations included using prisoners for target practice and subjecting them to a variety of grisly tortures to extract information, cutting off the ears of dead VC's, throwing VC suspects out of helicopters, burning villages, gang-raping women, packing the vagina of a North Vietnamese nurse with grease, and the like.

Among the persons assisting the VVAW in organizing and preparing this hearing was Mark Lane, author of *Conversations with Americans*, a collection of interviews with Vietnam veterans about war crimes. In a highly critical review of *Conversations with Americans,* Neil Sheehan of the New York *Times*—himself a sharp critic of American policy—was able to show that some of Lane's "witnesses" had never even served in Vietnam while others had not been in the combat situations they described in horrid detail. To prevent the Detroit hearings from being tainted by such irregularities, all the veterans testifying there fully identified the units in which they had served and provided geographical descriptions of where the alleged atrocities had taken place.

Yet the appearance of exactitude was deceptive. Senator Mark O. Hatfield of Oregon, impressed with the charges made by the veterans, inserted the transcript of the Detroit hearing into the Congressional Record. Furthermore, he asked the commandant of the Marine Corps to investigate the numerous allegations of wrongdoing made against the Marines in particular. The results of this investigation, carried out by the Naval Investigation Service, are interesting and revealing. Many of the veterans, though assured that they would not be questioned about atrocities they might have committed personally, refused to be interviewed. One of the active members of the VVAW told investigators that the leadership had directed the entire membership not to cooperate with military authorities. A black Marine, who agreed to be interviewed, called the Vietnam war "one huge atrocity" and "a racist plot," but was unable to provide details of the outrages he had described at the hearing. He admitted that the question of atrocities had not occurred to him while he was in Vietnam and that he had been assisted in the preparation of his testimony by a member of the Nation of Islam. But the most damaging finding consisted of the sworn statements of several veterans, corroborated by witnesses, that they had in fact not attended the hearing in Detroit. One of them had never been to Detroit in his life.

Incidents similar to some of those described at the VVAW hearing undoubtedly did occur. We know that prisoners were tortured, corpses were mutilated, and hamlets destroyed. Yet these incidents either (as in the destruction of hamlets) did not violate the law of war or took place in breach of existing regulations. In either case, they were not part of a "criminal policy." The VVAW's use of fake witnesses, and the failure to cooperate with military authorities and to provide crucial details of the incidents, further cast serious doubt on its professed desire to serve the causes of justice and humanity. It is more likely that this inquiry, like others earlier and later, had primarily political motives and goals.

IN THE absence of corroborating evidence, the atrocity stories told by some Vietnam veterans should have been treated by the media with far more circumspection than they in fact were. But the tendency on the part of all too many reporters and editors was to see the war in Vietnam as an atrocity writ large, and specific incidents reported were therefore widely accepted as true. Some allegations were repeated so many times that they seemed to supply their own confirmation.

One such story was that of prisoners being pushed out of helicopters in order to scare others into talking. It is, of course, possible that some

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American interrogators engaged in this criminal practice, but not a single instance has been confirmed. We do know of at least one case where such an occurrence was staged with the use of a dead body. The Army's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) identified the soldier who had taken the photograph; it also identified a second soldier who acquired the picture, made up the story of the interrogation, and mailed it and the photograph to his girlfriend. She in turn gave them to her brother, who informed the Chicago *Sun Times*. On November 29-30, 1969, the picture and the story appeared in the Chicago *Sun Times* and the Washington *Post* and generated wide media interest. The lengthy investigation by the CID established that a dead North Vietnamese soldier had been picked up on February 15, 1969, after an operation in Gia Dinh province, and adduced other details of how the picture had been posed. The commander of the helicopter in question was reprimanded; the two crew members who had pushed the body out of the aircraft had already been discharged and therefore were beyond the Army's disciplinary jurisdiction. The professional manner in which the CID and the services' legal officers generally carried out their investigative and prosecutory mandate supports the credibility of the official Army account of this episode.

Reporters at times were so anxious to obtain pictorial proof of war crimes they had heard about that on at least one occasion they themselves actually incited the commission of atrocities. On October 9, 1967, the CBS evening news showed a young American soldier cutting off the ear of a dead VC soldier as a souvenir of battle. An investigation disclosed that the soldier and another man in the same unit had acted on a "dare" after being offered a knife by a CBS cameraman, who then filmed the sequence. The two soldiers were tried by special court-martial and convicted of conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline and were sentenced to a reduction in grade and a fine. CBS News was informed of how the incident had been provoked, but refused to run a correction.

The Bombing of North Vietnam

AIR WARFARE is not regulated by an authoritative body of law in the same manner that land warfare is by the Hague and Geneva conventions. In 1923, a commission of jurists produced a code of rules, known as the Hague Air Warfare Rules, but it was never ratified and indeed was disregarded by all sides in World War II. The 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict sets certain implicit limits to aerial bombardment. In 1972, a conference of experts convened by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) proposed a protocol on air warfare which, while not formally ratified so far, appears to have wide support and today can probably be considered declaratory of international customary law.

According to this draft protocol, aerial attacks are to be limited to military objectives, defined as "objectives which, by their nature or use, contribute effectively and directly to the military effort of the adversary, or which are of a generally recognized military interest. . . ." According to the commentary on this draft, military objectives include airfields, railway lines, and roads "which are of fundamental military importance," as well as "industries of fundamental importance for the conduct of the war" or installations providing energy "mainly for military consumption." The key factor in defining a military objective is whether it makes an effective contribution to the war effort. The reasonable proportionality which must exist between the damage caused and the military gain produced, writes a French jurist, "constitutes the essential criterion of the legality of bombing directed against targets not having a purely military character."

The ICRC draft protocol forbids direct attacks upon the civilian population, in particular morale bombing and terrorization attacks of the kind that took place in World War II. However, "civilians who are within a military objective run the risks consequent upon any attack launched against this objective." In other words, it is recognized that in the course of attacks on military objectives, the civilian population may suffer incidental death or injury and that their property may be destroyed. Such casualties and damage do not violate international law if they are not disproportionate to the military advantage gained. The draft protocol also rejects the use of the civilian population as a shield: "The civilian population or individual civilians shall never be used in an attempt to shield, by their presence, military objectives from attack." The cities of an adversary do not gain immunity from attack because he has had the shrewdness to locate his military supply depots or missile sites there.

Among the legal authorities there is general agreement that the presence of a military force, either in occupation or passing through, deprives an objective of its status as an undefended place. By the same logic, any objective defended by anti-aircraft guns or missiles is no longer an undefended place and becomes a legitimate military target. Even hospitals lose their immunity if they are used for acts harmful to the enemy. In certain circumstances it may also be permissible to bomb an entire area. According to the international lawyer Morris Greenspan, legal justification for such attacks will depend on two factors: "The first must be the fact that the area is so preponderantly used for war industry as to impress that character on the whole of the neighborhood, making it essentially an indivisible whole. The second factor must be that the area is so heavily defended from air attack that the selection of specific targets within the area is impracticable."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IF WE apply these customary rules of air warfare to the American bombing of North Vietnam during the years 1965 to 1968, code-named Rolling Thunder, it appears that the conduct of the U.S. easily passes muster. "Given the state of aerial warfare to which we were brought by World War II," writes Telford Taylor, "I can see no sufficient basis for war-crimes charges based on the bombing of North Vietnam. Whatever the laws of war in this field *ought* to be, certainly Nuremberg furnishes no basis for these accusations." Indeed, it is clear that the American bombing of North Vietnam during Rolling Thunder was decisively more discriminating than the Allied bombardment of Germany and Japan in World War II. In Vietnam there was no bombing directed at the civilian population as such, and attacks either on fixed targets or by armed reconnaissance in fact conformed to the rather strict definition of "military objective" proposed by the ICRC in 1972.

Most of the charges of criminal conduct on closer examination turn out to involve collateral damage, which generally appears not to have been disproportionate to the military advantage gained or sought by the destruction of the military objective nearby. The town of Thanh Hoa, for example, which originally had 50-60,000 inhabitants, by 1966 had suffered extensive damage and was half-deserted. However, Thanh Hoa served as an important transshipment link in the route to the South. The town was also located three miles south of the Ham Rung (Dragon's Jaw) Bridge spanning the Song Ma River, a vital link in the North Vietnamese transportation system. The bridge was heavily defended, and American planes, despite repeated attacks during Rolling Thunder, failed to destroy it. It was finally felled by several "smart" bombs in 1972. The damage suffered by the town of Thanh Hoa and by a hospital situated there was obviously a result of the location of the town, in particular its closeness to this important bridge.

Damage inflicted on the Hoan Kiem quarter on the outskirts of Hanoi was related to attacks on the nearby Long Bien (Paul Doumer) Bridge over the Red River, a crucial railroad link with China and the port of Haiphong. Harrison E. Salisbury, the then assistant managing editor of the New York *Times*, who spent two weeks in North Vietnam during late 1966 and early 1967, called this bridge—5,532 feet long and consisting of 19 spans—"in all probability the single most important military objective in North Vietnam. Without the bridge the movement of traffic from north to south would be radically impeded." The heavily defended bridge was attacked successfully several times in 1966 and 1967. As of January 1967, 52 houses on Nguyen Thiep Street, about 150 yards from the approaches to the bridge, were said to have been destroyed, and 54 people were said to have been killed in these attacks. But neither the Long Bien Bridge nor the adjacent area nor, indeed, the city of Hanoi itself could insist on exemption from attack. Reporter David Schoenbrun, who visited Hanoi and toured the surrounding countryside in the summer of 1967, wrote: "Hanoi looks like an armed porcupine, with hundreds, probably thousands, of spiny steel gun snouts sticking out beyond the tops of trees."

Collateral damage appears to account also for the few confirmed cases of hits on dikes. In January 1966, Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton proposed for consideration attacks on locks and dams in order to cause flooding that could lead to widespread starvation "unless food is provided—which we could offer to do 'at the conference table.'" Successful attacks on irrigation dams and reservoirs had been carried out in the closing days of the Korean war, but this time the idea never even got to the drawing board. Eight of North Vietnam's 94 major locks and dams were on the target list, but only 2 were approved for strikes and actually hit. In view of the extensive bombing of inland waterways, it is not surprising that here and there incidental damage was done to the dikes and locks connected with them. But certainly, if the U.S. had decided to bomb the dikes, the results would have been far more telling, and there would have been extensive flood damage.

THE Communist propaganda onslaught against the bombing of North Vietnam was massive and ceaseless, and after a while many in the West began to accept even some of the more preposterous allegations. For example, witnesses before the Russell International War Crimes Tribunal in May 1967 charged that American flyers systematically and intentionally bombed North Vietnamese medical facilities. Hospitals, it was stated, "are shown on the *maps of targets* in the hands of U.S. pilots who have been shot down. . . ." (emphasis added). This testimony, of course, lends itself to a different interpretation: that hospitals were marked in order to *avoid* hitting them. To prevent such a construction, the U.S. Committee of Concerned Asian Scholars reported the testimony in this way: "Maps with hospitals *marked as targets* on them have been found in the possession of U.S. pilots shot down over North Vietnam" (emphasis added).

One member of an investigating team sent to North Vietnam by the Russell tribunal, a Scottish professor, was bothered by the question of intent. He told Harrison E. Salisbury: "It is easy enough to report that there has been enormous destruction of civilian property and non-military objectives. Anyone who travels in North Vietnam can see this. But is it intentional? This is the difficult question. How can we read the mind of the pilot who dropped the bombs or loosed the rockets? How can we know, for certain, what his orders were? How can we know from the ground what the airman high in the sky really thought he was doing?" But the tribunal preferred to ignore such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

scruples and did not call the professor as a witness. On May 10, 1967, it concluded unanimously that "the government and armed forces of the United States are guilty of the deliberate, systematic, and large-scale bombardment of civilian targets, including civilian populations, dwellings, villages, dams, dikes, medical establishments, leper colonies, schools, churches, pagodas, historical and cultural monuments." By subjecting the civilian population of North Vietnam to such bombing, it asserted, the U.S. had committed a war crime.

More damaging to U.S. prestige than these extreme charges was the reporting of Harrison E. Salisbury, the first American correspondent allowed into North Vietnam since the beginning of the air campaign. Salisbury's widely discussed dispatches left the impression that the U.S. was willfully bombing non-military targets. Only after the articles had appeared and had received extensive attention all over the world did a small number of persons learn that Salisbury, in effect, had given the authority of his byline to unverified Communist propaganda and that the New York *Times* had printed this information as though Salisbury had established it himself with his own on-the-scene reporting. Two days after the first dispatch from Hanoi, a little-noticed sentence casually pointed out: "It should be noted, incidentally, that all casualty estimates and statistics in these dispatches are those of North Vietnamese officials." When Salisbury's articles were published in book form in April 1967, the author took pains to indicate—by the insertion of such phrases as "according to the officials" and "they said"—that many of his details were in fact not based on personal observation. But by then, the harm had been done.

On December 25, 1966, Salisbury visited Nam Dinh, located some 40 miles southwest of Hanoi and formerly North Vietnam's third largest city, in order to inspect damage caused in earlier bombings. He was shown around by the mayor of the town who, reported Salisbury, "regards her city as essentially a cotton-and-silk textile town containing nothing of military significance. Nam Dinh has been systematically attacked by American planes since June 28, 1965. The cathedral tower looks out on block after block of utter desolation. . . . No American communiqué has asserted that Nam Dinh contains some facility that the United States regards as a military objective." City officials attributed the bombing of their town to an attempt to intimidate the population or to the endeavor to make Nam Dinh an object lesson to Hanoi. "Whatever the explanations," Salisbury wrote, "one can see that United States planes are dropping an enormous weight of explosives on purely civilian targets. Whatever else may be or might have been in Nam Dinh, it is the civilians who have taken the punishment. A brief tour of Namha province, in which Nam Dinh lies, shows that Nam Dinh is far from being exceptional."

The impression created by all this was that the U.S. was deliberately and secretly bombing a harmless textile town without military targets. Yet this was hardly the whole story. Nam Dinh happened to be a major transshipment point for supplies and soldiers moving south who were coming into and through the city by river and the north-south railroad. On at least three prior occasions, American communiqués had referred to the bombing of military targets in Nam Dinh—a large railroad yard, a huge storage depot, a POL (petroleum, oil, lubricants) storage area, and a thermal power plant. The North Vietnamese apparently did not share the view of the mayor of Nam Dinh that the city had no targets of military significance. As a Pentagon statement issued in response to the Salisbury dispatches and printed in the New York *Times* pointed out, the city was ringed by anti-aircraft gun batteries and by surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites. The city's three textile plants had never been targeted for attack, but, being located close to the power plant and the POL storage area, they, like residential buildings, had suffered extensive damage.

At no time did either Salisbury or the *Times* acknowledge that the dispatches dealing with the bombing of the city of Nam Dinh had borrowed extensively from a North Vietnamese propaganda pamphlet, *Report on U.S. War Crimes in Nam Dinh City,* which had appeared in October 1966. Failure to name this source is said to have cost Salisbury the Pulitzer Prize for which the *Times* nominated him.

THE North Vietnamese have never released any cumulative civilian casualty figures. According to American estimates, 52,000 civilians were killed during the course of Rolling Thunder between 1965 and 1968. When one recalls that almost 84,000 were killed in Tokyo in 1945 in two days of bombing alone, it becomes apparent that 52,000 deaths in three years is a relatively low figure—and it was due in substantial part to the care practiced by American pilots.

Department of Defense press releases always emphasized that the bombing of North Vietnam was limited to military targets and that all possible precautions were being taken to minimize damage to civilian lives and property. As the internal record shows, this was indeed the case—so much so, in fact, that various spokesmen for the military community repeatedly protested that these protective measures were hampering the effectiveness of the bombing. For example, Secretary of the Air Force Harold Brown, in a memo of March 4, 1968, urged the lifting of restrictions on the bombing of the North "so as to permit bombing of military targets without the present scrupulous concern for collateral civilian damage and casualties." But these requests were denied, and many pilots were shot down because the rules of engagement required approach angles and other tactics designed to reduce civilian casualties rather than to afford

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

maximum protection to the attacking aircraft.

Nevertheless, collateral damage was inevitable for several reasons. First, until the perfection of the "smart" bomb during the last stage of the Vietnam war, which brought an unprecedented degree of precision to this type of warfare, bombing was an inherently inaccurate process. Despite sophisticated computer equipment, the precision of the bombing was degraded by errors involving boresight, release mechanisms, bomb dispersion, aiming, and the computational system. Unknown winds at altitudes below the release point further complicated the pilot's task. All this meant that, as one Navy pilot wrote in 1969, "it is impossible to hit a small target with bombs except by sheer luck."

Secondly, the North Vietnamese made it a practice to disperse their storage depots. Salisbury reported seeing oil drums, munitions, and all manner of hardware stacked out in fields, beside rural roads, and "cluttering up paths that led to rice paddies—indeed, in all the time I rode about the countryside I think I was never more than two or three minutes out of sight of some kind of supplies and equipment which had come to rest in the most unlikely setting." Supplies placed in "unlikely settings," including inhabited places, of course created the danger of attack and explain the many reports of raids by American aircraft on rural targets. Anti-aircraft batteries and SAM sites, too, as reconnaissance photos clearly show, were often located in residential areas. One pilot recalls his difficulties in hitting a railroad yard in the town of Viet Tri northwest of Hanoi because of a nearby complex of buildings off-limits as a hospital. "If it was in fact a hospital, it must have been a hospital for sick flak gunners, because every time we looked at it from a run on the railhead, it was a mass of sputtering, flashing gun barrels." When American flyers sought to hit targets placed in the midst of villages and towns or tried to defend themselves against hostile fire coming from such places, civilian lives and property were inevitably lost.

The problem of bombing accuracy was especially acute in the case of armed-reconnaissance missions against targets of opportunity along assigned routes or in assigned areas, which constituted about 90 per cent of all sorties flown against North Vietnam. In the South, pilots flying fast jet fighter bombers had the benefit of forward air controllers (FAC's) who marked targets with smoke bombs and guided the jets to them. Without FAC's, strike pilots had great difficulty seeing or correctly identifying small objectives. Also, when unable to get to or find lucrative targets, pilots would often go on "hunting" for less important targets until their fuel supply was exhausted. It is possible that these secondary targets on occasion were indeed of limited military significance.

Last but not least, precision in bombing was impaired by the increasingly heavy and sophisticated air defenses of North Vietnam. The number of missiles fired at American planes went up from 200 in 1965 to 3,484 in 1967; the number of anti-aircraft guns grew from 700 to 7,400 by March 1968. During Rolling Thunder, the U.S. lost 938 planes to North Vietnam's air defenses, which military observers called the tightest installed anywhere. If there was a possibility of error even under perfect flying conditions, in a combat environment, when pilots had to dodge extremely heavy anti-aircraft fire and keep an eye on SAM's, accuracy was even more difficult to achieve. Damage also resulted from SAM's which fell back to earth without finding their target, for the Russian-made SAM's, unlike American ones, did not have an automatic self-destruct mechanism. Moreover, American pilots at times had to jettison their bombs in order to be able to enter air battles with enemy jets. In situations where air defenses are intensive, writes one student of the law of air warfare, "It is usually more accurate to recognize that both attacking and defending forces in an air raid cause civilian casualties."

WHATEVER the wisdom of Rolling Thunder on political and other grounds, it is reasonable to conclude that the air campaign against North Vietnam during the years 1965 to 1968 did not violate the law of war and that the extensive damage caused to civilian areas was incidental to the bombing of legitimate military targets. This was also the finding of many critics of American military policy. Telford Taylor noted that Harrison E. Salisbury's reports had graphically described the extent of the physical damage caused by the American bombing but "fell far short of demonstrating any intent to cause civilian casualties." James Cameron, a British journalist whom *Time* described as of the "ban-the-bomb breed," wrote after a visit to North Vietnam in 1966: "It was my impression, and I am not wholly ignorant of the processes of tactical bombing, that United States attacks on North Vietnam had been, as they claimed, aimed generally at what they could define as military objectives. . . . I do not believe that the Americans set out to bomb homes and hospitals; if they had wished to do so it would have been extremely easy to do." An American flyer, Captain Michael J. Heck, who since 1966 had participated in numerous missions against North Vietnam, and in 1972 asked for conscientious-objector status and refused to fly any more attacks on the North on the grounds that U.S. goals did not justify the destruction and killing caused, told a correspondent of the New York *Times*: "I don't think we intentionally targeted civilian targets. . . ." Non-military objectives were hit because of human error, malfunctioning of equipment, or as a result of pilots' having to dodge missiles. But "I don't think it was intentional."

Offensive operations against North Vietnam ended on October 31, 1968. When the full-scale

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bombing of North Vietnam was resumed following the 1972 Easter invasion of South Vietnam, there were once again charges of deliberate attacks on hospitals, schools, and other civilian targets, charges that were no more substantiated than those made during Rolling Thunder. Reconnaissance photos showed bomb craters on several dikes, but these were all in close proximity to other targets of high military value; no major dike was breached or functionally damaged, and the high-water season passed without significant flooding.

A BREAKTHROUGH occurred in the long-stalled peace talks in Paris when Hanoi dropped its insistence on a coalition government and the resignation of Thieu. On October 23, 1972, President Nixon, in a gesture of good will, suspended all bombing north of the 20th parallel. On October 26, Secretary of State Kissinger told a news conference that "peace is at hand." But this announcement was premature, and by November 23 the negotiations in Paris had reached a new deadlock—the result of sloppy drafting of the text of the projected agreement, new objections from Thieu, and a withdrawal of several important concessions by Hanoi. On December 19, Nixon ordered the resumption of full-scale bombing of North Vietnam and there followed the so-called Christmas bombing—code-named Linebacker II.

Linebacker II lasted 12 days, though the weather was clear enough for visual bombing for only 12 hours. During these 12 days there were 729 B-52 sorties and about 1,000 fighter-bomber attack sorties; 20,370 tons of bombs were dropped over all of Vietnam. A total of 26 planes were lost, including 15 B-52's. The bombing was concentrated on targets in the Hanoi-Haiphong complexes and included transportation terminals, rail yards, warehouses, power plants, airfields, and the like. By the time the bombing was halted on December 29, North Vietnam's electrical power supply had been crippled and extensive damage had been caused to all other targets as well. North Vietnamese air defenses had also been shattered; during the last few days, American planes roamed the skies with virtual impunity.

Thanks to the new "smart" bombs, accuracy in most cases was almost surgical, but on account of the extensive utilization of B-52 bombers there was some spillage of bomb damage to adjacent residential areas. It was estimated that in 90 per cent of all B-52 missions, one or more bombs, because of bent or damaged fins, escaped the normal bomb train and landed outside the target box. This incidental civilian damage and the overall extremely destructive impact of Linebacker II gave rise to predictable outcries of terror bombing. The December bombing, Hanoi charged, surpassed the atrocities committed by the "Hitlerite fascists" and represented an "escalation of genocide to an all-time high." In only 12 days, "the Nixon administration wrought innumerable Oradours, Lidices, Guernicas, Coventrys. . . ." Anti-war groups in America and many others joined in the worldwide chorus of denunciation.

These charges are disproven by evidence available then and by later reports from the scene. The North Vietnamese themselves at the time claimed between 1,300 and 1,600 fatalities, and even though both Hanoi and Haiphong were partially evacuated, such a number of victims is surely not indicative of terror bombing. Attacks explicitly aimed at the morale of the population took place against Germany and Japan during World War II and killed tens of thousands. According to an East German estimate, 35,000 died in the triple raid on Dresden in February 1945; the official casualty toll of the bombing of Tokyo with incendiaries on March 9-10, 1945 stands (as already mentioned) at 83,793 dead and 40,918 wounded. The Hanoi death toll, wrote the London *Economist*, "is smaller than the number of civilians killed by the North Vietnamese in their artillery bombardment of An Loc in April or the toll of refugees ambushed when trying to escape from Quang Tri at the beginning of May. That is what makes the denunciation of Mr. Nixon as another Hitler sound so unreal." Part of the death toll was undoubtedly caused by the North Vietnamese themselves, for they launched about 1,000 SAM's, many of which exploded in the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong and took their toll on their own people.

Among the civilian facilities hit was the Bach Mai Hospital in Hanoi. The North Vietnamese cited the extensive damage to this hospital as proof of American criminal intentions, and the charge of deliberate attacks on civilian targets was accepted as true by Dale S. DeHaan, counsel to the Kennedy committee on refugees, who visited Hanoi in March 1973, and by Senator Edward Kennedy himself. Yet other observers offered a different explanation. The hospital was located about 1,000 yards from the Bach Mai airstrip and the military barracks, which were heavily bombed. The attack, wrote Telford Taylor after visiting the site in January 1973, "was probably directed at the airfield and nearby barracks and oil-storage units." Murray Marder of the Washington *Post* and Peter Ward of the Baltimore *Sun* concurred in this view, and aerial photographs released by the Defense Department in May 1973 further confirmed that the hospital had been hit by bombs escaping the normal bomb train.

Damage to residential areas in Hanoi and Haiphong, too, was clearly the result of gravity-drop bombs which had fallen short of the railroad sidings, warehouses, and industrial plants targeted and destroyed. Malcolm W. Browne of the New York *Times* was greatly surprised by the condition in which he later found Hanoi, and wrote that "the damage caused by American bombing was grossly overstated by North Vietnamese propaganda. . . ." "Hanoi has certainly been damaged,"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

noted Peter Ward of the Baltimore *Sun* on March 25, 1973 after a visit, "but evidence on the ground disproves charges of indiscriminate bombing. Several bomb loads obviously went astray into civilian residential areas, but damage there is minor, compared to the total destruction of selected targets."

The Question of Genocide

IN 1967, the second session of the Russell International War Crimes Tribunal adopted a statement on genocide that was formulated by Jean-Paul Sartre. The U.S. government, Sartre maintained, was engaged in "wiping out a whole people and imposing the Pax Americana on an uninhabited Vietnam." In the South, specifically, American forces were conducting a "massive extermination" of the people of South Vietnam, killing men, women, and children merely because they were Vietnamese; this represented "genocide in the strictest sense."

The Russell tribunal was not alone in charging the U.S. with genocide. The new military technology used by America in Vietnam, wrote Theodore Draper in 1967, "produces a dehumanized genocide"; American policy-makers, argued Daniel Berrigan, have, "for some time now, legitimated murder and expanded murder into genocide." According to Frances FitzGerald, although no one in the U.S. government consciously planned a policy of genocide, in fact the policy of the military commanders "had no other military logic, and their course of action was indistinguishable from it." The specific violations of the law of war, held Professor Richard A. Falk, may have "a cumulative impact that can fairly add up to genocide." Scorched-earth tactics and the use of cruel weapons against the civilian population "appears to me to establish a *prima facie* case of genocide against the United States."

A convention against genocide was adopted by a unanimous United Nations General Assembly on December 9, 1948; it came into force on January 12, 1951. The U.S. signed but so far has not ratified the convention; however, it probably can be assumed that the prohibition of genocide is today part of customary international law. In the convention, the crime of genocide was defined as committing, "with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group, as such," acts such as "killing members of the group," "causing serious bodily or mental harm," "deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part." The prototype of genocide which inspired the convention was, of course, Hitler's attempted extermination of the Jews of Europe, designed to bring about "the final solution" of the Jewish question.

If genocide consists of the *destruction* of a people *in whole or in part*, the first place one should look in assessing this charge is at population statistics. According to figures compiled by the United Nations, the populations of both North and South Vietnam increased steadily during and despite the war, at annual rates of change roughly double the rate of the U.S. This fact alone makes the charge of genocide a bit grotesque.

In order to establish the crime of genocide, one must also be able to demonstrate *intent* to destroy a certain group of people in whole or in part. With regard to North Vietnam, as I have attemped to show, the bombing never deliberately aimed at the population and therefore cannot be adduced as evidence of genocide. As for the fighting in the South, the evidence available makes it similarly absurd to argue that the U.S. at any time in the war had the intent of destroying the people of that country. Indeed, quite the contrary can easily be shown to be true.

WHILE the American way of war undoubtedly took the lives of many noncombatants, these casualties were never inflicted as a matter of policy. The concern of the American military command with the prevention of death or damage to the civilian population led to the promulgation of rules of engagement aimed at minimizing such casualties. American advisers, too, were told to "make every effort to convince Vietnamese counterparts of the necessity for preservation of the lives and property of noncombatants. Counterparts must be encouraged to promulgate and implement parallel instruction." In an instruction program established in 1965, newly arrived soldiers were taught that respect for civilian life was not only a matter of basic decency and legality, but was also essential for winning the "hearts and minds" of the people. The intelligence gained from a population willingly assisting in the war against the Communist insurgents, they were told, could save their own lives. It is true that until the My Lai incident, the rules of engagement were not as widely known as they should have been, and the American command can justly be faulted with failing to take all possible measures to enforce these rules. But such negligence is a far cry from having a genocidal intent to destroy the people of South Vietnam.

Moreover, American aid programs contributed substantially to the improvement of public health and the availability of medical care. Between the early 1960's and 1972, AID provided funds for the provision of 29 surgical suites, and for the construction of more than 170 district, 370 village, and 400 hamlet maternity-dispensaries. In addition, about 15 per cent of occupied beds in American military hospitals were used by Vietnamese civilians. These measures gradually alleviated the overcrowded conditions created in the early years of the war by the load of civilian war casualties. Under contract with AID, 774 American physicians served 60-day tours of duty in a Vietnamese hospital; under the Military Provin-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cial Health Assistance Program (MILPHAP), medical teams, each including three physicians, assisted Vietnamese provincial hospitals in the application of medical expertise; every American unit had its medical civic-action program (MEDCAP) which provided medical care in the villages and gave immunizations for polio, TB, tetanus, etc. The quality of medical care in Vietnam often left much to be desired. Yet whatever the shortcomings of the American medical-aid program, it surely does not fit into any kind of scheme to destroy the Vietnamese people.

All of this, together with the various aid programs aimed at improving the technological and economic development of South Vietnam, makes it understandable that the cumulative impact of the American presence in Vietnam was a substantial *rise* in the standard of living and a consequent population increase. The "good effects," a South Vietnamese oppositionist to Thieu wrote in late 1974, "were always intentional while the 'bad effects' were unintentional. They were the side-effects, the byproducts of the war and the American presence."

Detailed calculations that cannot be reproduced here lead to the conclusion that the Vietnam war, during the years of active American involvement, was no more destructive of civilian life, both North and South, than other armed conflicts of this century and a good bit less so than some, such as the Korean war. Whereas the proportion of civilians killed in Korea may have been as high as 70 per cent of the total death toll, in Vietnam it was about 45 per cent. If we bear in mind that the battle for Korea leveled practically all major population centers, while much of the most severe fighting in Vietnam took place in uninhabited jungle terrain or in sparsely populated areas, this conclusion is hardly surprising. In any case, the cost of the Vietnam war in civilian lives does *not* justify the allegation that the U.S. was engaged in a conflict where an unusually and unacceptably high number of noncombatants was being killed.

IN SUM, the American record in Vietnam is not a succession of war crimes and does not support charges of a systematic and willful violation of existing agreements for standards of human decency in time of war. Such charges, leveled by many critics of the American involvement, were based on a distorted picture of the actual battlefield situation, on ignorance of existing rules of engagement, and on a tendency to construe every mistake of judgment as a wanton breach of the law of war. Furthermore, many critics had only the most rudimentary understanding of international law and freely indulged in fanciful interpretations of conventions and treaties so as to make the American record look as bad as possible. Finally, Communist propagandists unleashed a torrent of largely unsubstantiated charges with the hope that at least some of the lies would stick. This, indeed, occurred, for many publicists, journalists, and intellectuals in the West were only too well prepared to believe the worst about the conduct of the U.S. in Vietnam.

Much that happened during the American military effort in Vietnam was legal but could be criticized on other grounds. Some of the tactics used were certainly not calculated to help in winning the "hearts and minds" of the people, and were probably a contributory cause of the ultimate collapse of South Vietnam. There is reason to believe that the suffering inflicted upon large segments of South Vietnam's rural population during long years of high-technology warfare created a widespread feeling of resignation, war weariness, and an unwillingness to go on fighting against the resolute opponent from the North. Similarly, revulsion at the fate of thousands of hapless civilians killed and maimed by the deadly weapons of modern war undercut the willingness of America as a nation to prosecute the fight; this suggests that for a democracy, reliance upon such weapons may be counterproductive on still another level.

INSENSITIVITY to political costs, rigidity of doctrine, and shortsighted and self-defeating tactics may lose wars, but they do not constitute war crimes or immoral conduct. Examined dispassionately, American actions in Vietnam lend no support to the accusations of criminality or of gross immorality with which America's conduct of the war was charged at the time, and of which it is still widely assumed to be guilty. Today it is more urgent than ever that this be understood, for the simple reason that Vietnam continues to haunt our minds and continues to exert a powerful influence on our conception of ourselves as a nation and of our role in the world. The task of clearing away the cobwebs of mythology which have helped to create the national trauma over Vietnam must begin—for the sake of historical truth as much as for our own self-confidence, our moral strength, and our future capacity to act responsibly in world affairs.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Post-Mortem

A Story

Naomi Shepherd

I'D just came back from seeing the Bernheims off at Ben-Gurion airport, which was an unnecessary gesture. If I hadn't taken them, I might have worked on my book, or taken the children swimming, or sorted the bills in the study desk. Not paid them, but put them in order. And I wouldn't have had the argument with my wife.

When I came in, she was taking a cake out of the oven. She had used the opportunity to show me just how much activity could be compressed into one morning: children taken to swimming pool, translation completed, cake baked. The Israeli female's rite of the Sabbath cake needs investigation; Hanna seems to think her sexuality is in doubt if that hot, sweet-smelling mound doesn't appear on the table by sundown. And all I'd done with the day was to see off the Bernheims.

"Couldn't they have hired an Avis car, and seen themselves off?" she asked. They could. "And did they have to leave on a Friday morning, the hardest day of the week for us, when I need you around?" They did. "And why did you lend them that suitcase when you know you'll never get it back?" "I'll get it back," I said, "because they'll be here in a couple of years, and we won't be going anywhere before then."

"You know quite well they won't be back," she said, "because Gail just couldn't wait to leave. I saw her throw out the Hebrew grammar she's been pretending to use all year, when she was packing. And she gave all her ordinary Israeli clothes to the maid and just kept the blouse with the Yemenite embroidery, and she'll probably pretend she bought *that* in Morocco."

"They travel light," I said, "sending books airmail. That was a terrible grammar, and if I remember right, you lent it to her."

"And you insisted on lending them our subscription ticket to the Philharmonic, and they used it for the best concerts and left us the duds."

"They'd do the same for us in the States," I said.

"Yes, if we ever get there, which we won't," said Hanna.

We sat and glowered at each other over the still steaming cake.

As Gail and Art had just left, I was feeling warmer toward them than I had for some time. "Look," I said, "you know that Art really loved Israel. He was stimulated, and contented, and—do you know what I thought at the airport?—I thought he looked healthy, really healthy. I've never seen Art look healthy."

"He can get the same tan in California," said Hanna. "All right, he had his students, and everyone made a fuss over him, but Gail complained non-stop: male chauvinism, no civil-rights movement, and why is all the bread unwrapped?"

"We weren't trying to sell Israel to them," I said.

"And look what you did for him: intriguing, scheming, things you never do for yourself," said Hanna.

We had now reached the point. Once more, without malice, Hanna was saying that I'm too unambitious, unaggressive, and un-Israeli too, though *that* she will never actually say.

So I got up and left the table and went into the study and slammed the door, or tried to, but since what we call the study is really an extension of the living room, and since we have the kind of sliding doors which don't quite fit—adapted from an American model, but probably with one page of instructions missing, like so many Israeli versions of American living—you can't slam the study door. So I turned my back on the crack in the door, and pretended to work in the hour or so left before the Sabbath, and actually spent it thinking about Art and Gail Bernheim, who had taken up enough of my day already.

The evening before, they'd given us a present, a beautifully carved Italian wall cabinet which now stood in a corner of the study. Hanna had already put a plant on top to domesticate it, but that looked wrong, so I put the plant on the floor. They'd found the cabinet in the Tel Aviv flea market, and probably paid some crazy sum for it. Art had always been generous, whatever Hanna said.

NAOMI SHEPHERD, a new contributor, is a Welsh-born journalist who lives in Israel and has written articles and stories for a variety of British and American publications.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hanna would tell everyone who had given us the bookcase, and it would be much admired, whereas if she were consistent, she would chop it up and make a bonfire.

However, Art had left me with a problem.

I'd volunteered to be Art's man, when he wrote me that he and his wife were coming to Israel for a trial year, on sabbatical. Ah, that Israeli sabbatical, balm of hurt minds. The problem with living here is that I can't take an Israeli sabbatical myself. Actually I'm not sure that he *said* "trial year," but it was understood, because we'd been corresponding for years ever since we left college. I'd kept all his letters, too, as if he were Oliver Wendell Holmes, though I am quite sure he hasn't kept mine.

In the beginning, I was the free spirit, and Art was in a rut, or that was the game we played. I taught night school in Paris and Rome, wrote poetry, investigated life. He was working on extradition treaties for some government agency and had labeled himself a junior lecturer in a university law department. Then he went briefly to Vietnam on an intelligence mission, and joined the anti-war brigade. I came to Israel just in time for the Six-Day War, married Hanna, and remained.

By the time Art was ready to visit Israel, he was married too, the tone of his letters was less apologetic, and the tone of mine was, I suppose, more harassed. But I still had the authentic edge on him. He wrote that he envied me Israel, where I was coping with the realities that he had only glimpsed in Vietnam. Art was very good at defining moral and legal problems, but had difficulty in making personal decisions, such as which university appointment to choose, and where to send his parents, now senior citizens. He implied in his letters that I was lucky that both my parents were dead, as they no longer needed to worry about me, nor I about them.

Shortly after he married, I was surprised to read that Art, now a junior professor at Harvard, was taking an interest in the moral and legal aspects of birth-control campaigns sponsored by the U.S. in the developing countries, an interest which had earned him a column or two in the weekly magazines. Both he and his wife, who had been in the Peace Corps, appeared on television and before congressional subcommittees. It was unlike Art to expose himself in this way, and it wasn't until I met Gail that I understood what had happened.

When Art wrote hinting that he would enjoy an Israeli sabbatical, and the department approved, I was slogging away at the draft of a book, long delayed. I was writing on a minor aspect of constitutional law, which I had chosen because it had philosophical ramifications, and yet seemed directly related to Israel's problems with politics and religion. I thought of myself as making some quiet, fundamental contribution to Israel's future constitution. And I confided to Art in my letters what I would not have told Hanna: that the pressures of family life meant that I had to improve my position in the department. Total professional freedom, I implied, was something for the young and unattached (i.e., Art had missed it).

Hanna was very interested in my book at first, but now she wanted to know what people were going to do with it. She was comparing my work with Art's birth-control campaign, and as that is ever the interesting subject to women, Art was ahead of me.

I enjoyed being quizzed about Art. My colleagues, journalists, and anxious foreign-ministry men were continuously on the telephone; was he pro, anti, New Left, Orthodox, agnostic? Where did he stand on the Israel-Diaspora issue, the social gap, the Palestinians? "Art doesn't believe in committing himself from a distance," I said, "Wait till he gets here."

HANNA recognized Art at the airport, from a newspaper shot, before I did. He had become much fatter, with a library complexion, but he had the same deprecating grin. Gail made a good impression. Perhaps she was a little too determined to ask questions all the way to Jerusalem: was that a kibbutz or a moshav, what system of irrigation were they using in those fields, how near were we to the old border? And so on. But, as Art commented, she'd been a reporter, and had the habit of asking questions—without necessarily listening to the answers, he added.

Art and I scarcely made contact at first. He was, I thought, absurdly interested in college and old friends. I am entirely without nostalgia for the old days, and Art is the only relic of that time for me. At first I thought he had no awareness of Israel at all.

He was touchingly shy in the department. He gave his lectures diffidently, as though he expected to be criticized. He was not even aroused when old Professor Altenhammer, for whom it was a point of honor to attack visitors, tried to find holes in Art's theories at a seminar, and was roundly defeated by his ambitious second-in-command, Ben Ishai, with Art himself looking mildly on. He learned one all-purpose phrase in Hebrew: an elegant, beautifully worded "I am not perfectly conversant with the language," with which he fended off all telephone callers.

But while he refused to be interviewed or lionized, Art made himself very popular in the department. He didn't mind the interminable committee meetings that he really was not obliged to attend; he never complained that the university had rented him a room in a noisy building; he didn't mind the way his schedules were suddenly changed, and he didn't lose his temper when someone else was using his classroom. He seemed to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

enjoy everyone he met at work, from the janitor who never got his name right to the fussy German secretary they had given him and for whom he put on his Herr Professor act: "Yes, Mrs. Crechzner, I know that three of my five students for the six o'clock seminar are doing reserve duty and the fourth is working late in the office today, but I think I ought to come for that one righteous man, don't you?"

The Bernheims dutifully attended the department's social evenings. On these occasions, however, Art irritated everyone. They would come in, Gail leading like an energetic tug guiding a sluggish liner through choppy waters, and Art would deposit himself in the most comfortable chair (Gail always sat on the floor) and make no effort to join in the conversation, which was held in English for the Bernheims' sake. Gail did all the talking, and after a while, as no one was interested in Art's wife, the conversation would revert to Hebrew, Gail would be relegated to the women's corner, which she obviously resented, and I would have to talk to Art. After several such evenings, I began to notice that Art managed to chat with me (college reminiscences) and listen to the conversation around him at the same time. I also suspected that he knew more Hebrew than he let on; when I charged him with it, he grinned.

After a few weeks we invited the Bernheims to a picnic in a forest near Jerusalem. It was mild autumn weather, like a European summer, Gail remarked. (She was always comparing Israel with Europe, perhaps because for her the world was divided into three parts: the United States, Europe, and the East.) We drove up a winding road to a hilltop from which we could see the Mediterranean, a hazy blue line to the west, and the outline of Jerusalem on the eastern hills. It was one of our favorite places, but it did not have the effect on the Bernheims which we had expected. Gail began talking about Connecticut, and how beautiful it was at this season, and Art, who never noticed where he was, was more affected by the magnificent spread Hanna had prepared. When we had eaten, Art lay on his back and closed his eyes. Gail was now on to civil rights: she wanted to know why Hanna and I had no Arab friends.

"I had some Arab students who came around occasionally," I said, "but they weren't our age. Most students go to Haifa these days, it's nearer Galilee, where they live."

"When those students of yours were in Jerusalem, where did they live?" asked Gail.

"I suppose in the university hostel," I said. "I didn't ask."

"I hear they can't find rooms in any private home here," said Gail, bright-eyed, ferreting.

"I don't know," I said lamely. "No one complained to me."

"You haven't investigated the situation."

"Oh, there was a seminar in Haifa last year," I said. "Not just about accommodations. Job prospects, and so on."

"I see," said Gail. "I guess not enough is being done on the integration issue. It's politically dangerous, isn't it?"

Hanna glared at me. "It isn't so simple," she said. "On the one hand, they want to be apart, in different schools and neighborhoods; they don't want to pay the same taxes, either. To my opinion" (Hanna's English sagged when she was angry), "you can't make comparisons with the American Negroes."

"Blacks," Gail corrected.

"Blacks." Hanna was sidetracked.

Art spoke with his eyes still shut. "Let them be Negroes here, Gail, no one's listening."

Gail tried to smile, but it didn't work. She stood up, brushing pine needles from her skirt. She wasn't relaxed, and she seemed angry with Art's listless position. His shirt was half out of his trousers, and he hadn't shaved. I suddenly remembered that he never shaved on Saturdays; it was an echo from life in his Orthodox parents' home, like not eating ham or oysters. Art ate both, but he never shaved on Saturday.

We had this kind of discussion many times afterward with Art and Gail, or rather with Gail, because Art merely modified what Gail said. Gail was annoyed at the slapdash way Israelis ran birth control: Hanna pointed out that official policy was to increase the birthrate, and Israel needed more children. Gail couldn't understand why nuclear disarmament wasn't a live issue in Israel; I pointed out that the fear of nuclear holocaust was outclassed in Israel by more urgent concerns. Hanna had more trouble with Gail than I did, for Gail was attending a language course at the university and had time on her hands. She would drop in on Hanna for coffee, and Hanna, who had a part-time teaching job and also did translations at home, was furious at morning interruptions. "The worst of it is," she said one lunchtime when I dropped in and found her angrily stacking hamburgers for the children who were due in soon from their (according to Gail) "ridiculously short" school day, "She makes me say things I don't really mean, like the Israeli Arabs are better off economically than Arabs elsewhere, and abortions here are cheaper than in the U.S., and kids are readier for study after army service; but she makes me so mad I turn into someone else." Her eyes filled with tears and she laughed angrily.

"Just try and remember it's all personal," I advised. "Gail versus Art, and since she can't rouse him, she scores with you."

Meanwhile, Art and I were having different meetings. Over soggy meals in the cafeteria or on the long strolls that Art loved—he wouldn't walk but moved along crabwise, talking—Art kept tell-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing me how good, how very good he felt in Israel. He loved Tel Aviv, which Gail abhorred ("just like the Bronx"), the Orthodox quarter in Jerusalem, bargaining in street markets, talking to shopkeepers in the dingiest, ugliest little shops he could find. He was blind to the landscape, indifferent to Jerusalem monuments, the Wall. He preferred to stand shyly in the doorway of some little crowded synagogue. It was Gail who was always exclaiming about the quality of the light on Jerusalem stone in the evening ("The only other place I know with that wonderful tone is Rome") or the way the hill terraces merged with the open desert, though she complained that the twilight was too short.

"We'll get it lengthened for you," said Art.

Art also loved Hanna and her cooking. He used to come in and peer into the oven or the refrigerator, the way other guests look at books and pictures. He didn't need to eat her *burekas* or her potato salad. I told him he was a gastronomic voyeur.

"She makes all this stuff *and* she reads books," Art would say. "What a woman."

It was difficult for me to stay silent about Gail, but I discovered the perfect technique. I simply asked questions about her, which showed interest without actually involving me in lies.

One evening we were leaving the university together and were brought up short by a breathtaking downpour which suddenly hit Jerusalem after a cloudless winter day, and neither of us had an umbrella. We stood near the glass doors as hardier men pulled their sweaters over their heads and made a run for it. "Has Gail joined that planned-parenthood committee yet?" I asked. Art looked at me quizzically. "They started on the wrong foot," he said. "Apparently they asked her if she had kids of her own, and she felt it was irrelevant."

"Of course it was," I said, pleased to be on Gail's side. "*And* personal."

"I'm not sure," he said. "I like that about Israel. Everything's personal."

"Isn't that claustrophobic?"

"No," said Art, "I like it. Hell," he said suddenly, "why shouldn't Israel be intrusive and personal and demanding, reactionary, militaristic, male-chauvinist, you name it. Why not?"

"That's disingenuous, Art, and you know it."

"No, I don't," said Art. "Everybody told me I'd be asked whether I was going to stay, everybody warned me you'd try and recruit me. Why the hell are you all so delicate about it?"

I was taken aback. "Does Gail? . . ." I began.

"Gail's a good kid, but she doesn't understand anything. You know she wanted to adopt a Vietnamese war orphan."

He hadn't written about that.

"I wasn't against the idea at first," said Art. "Then I thought: why not a Jewish kid? So you know what she said? She said I was a racist."

"Um," I said.

"So I'm a racist, fine. I wouldn't give way, so instead of adopting a kid, we went into the birth-control campaign." This sounded bitter, and so unlike Art that I gave him a nervous look, and he laughed, relaxing.

"My guess is that she'll have a kid in the end," he said. "There's no reason why she shouldn't." We stared at the rain. "Anyway, I want to stay; are you going to help me or not?"

That was how it started. Art had wanted a permanent job in the department, and no one had even guessed it. He was a distinguished visitor, disliked by Altenhammer, the department head, much admired by his deputy, Ben Ishai, popular with the students, whose opinion did not count. It is one thing to like a man on sabbatical, especially the Israeli sabbatical, that intellectual equivalent of buying Israel Bonds, and another thing to want him with you on an everyday basis, disturbing the pecking order, complicating department intrigue.

Almost immediately, I was in trouble. I have never been particularly popular with my colleagues; I hate committee work and prefer to spend my free time with non-jurists, but the students liked me and I'd believed I was an acceptable, if eccentric, member of the department. But one day, when the reshuffling process was at its most intense, one of my colleagues did not return my smile in the library. Instead, he hissed, "It's all very well for you, with that manuscript in that old briefcase of yours, but some of us are aiming for mobility, you understand?" Then, perhaps horrified by what he had said, he shook my shoulder, smiled, and left.

In that unpleasant moment, I saw myself afresh in my colleagues' eyes: not as a man quietly constructing his masterwork, but as an employee, clocking in and out till pension day. And pushing old school friends ahead of colleagues.

"Should I get rid of this briefcase?" I asked Hanna. It was an old friend, dated back to college days, had been through Europe with me.

"I've been telling you to do that for years; now I suppose someone else has said it."

Ben Ishai was a diplomat. He decided to bring Art in as deputy head of the department, thus avoiding a difficult choice between two potential successors to this, his own post. The following year he was to succeed Altenhammer in the chair. The crisis seemed over.

But Altenhammer had other ideas. He disliked Ben Ishai marginally more than Art. He had seen Ben Ishai hovering near him for years; it was Ben Ishai who would profit the most from his retirement. He pursuaded the university fathers to offer the chair to Art.

On the night the news broke, Hanna and the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

children remained shut in the kitchen till nearly midnight, because the living room lies inconveniently between the kitchen and the bedrooms, and Hanna dared not open the kitchen door until Ben Ishai had left. It was useless for me to say that I had nothing to do with old Altenhammer's decision. It was hopeless to deny that powerful Baltimore donors had pressed Art on him, alerted by me. It was well known that Altenhammer liked me, but who was to know or believe that this was chiefly because of our discussions of walking tours in the Dordognes?

The next day, Hanna and I had our worst argument in years. She said that she didn't want her home used as a department battleground. I said that she had always instructed me to get more involved in department affairs; now that I had done so, she was turning on me. She said involved, yes, but not to the point of endangering my career for someone else. I said that since I had tenure, I wasn't endangering anything. "Yes, but what about promotion?" I shrugged my shoulders. She said I lacked the fighting instinct, and had passed this on to our oldest son. At this point Art phoned. Could we meet right away? Could he come over to my place, because Gail was resting? Hanna threw the dishes into the sink and marched out.

It is difficult to get angry with Art. He absorbs anger the way a tennis net takes a fast ball. But when he put his head around the door that morning, looking so pleased with himself, and puffing from the stairs—how can he get so overweight on Gail's cooking?—I said, "Sit down, there isn't any coffee left, and let's get it over with."

He didn't even notice that I was annoyed. He just stood in the doorway, beaming, and I had to go around him to shut the door. "Gail's pregnant," he said.

He had told her about the offer of the chair the previous night, and she had responded with her own good news. You can't fault Gail's timing.

So I lost that first chance to be angry with Art. I brought out a bottle of Israeli champagne, sparkling wine it's called, and we made all sorts of stupid jokes, like giving the child the name My Lai, and everything we said was in that vein. Show me the man who doesn't offend good taste when he is really affected. As far as I remember, we didn't even mention the department, or Art's future; it didn't seem relevant. We talked about our lives during the period we'd been out of contact—a time we'd scarcely touched on before—and for some reason Art filled me in about the other women in his life, and I told him about mine. We hadn't got to Gail and Hanna by the time Hanna came back and, to give her credit, joined in the celebration with a will. She even said to me later that a child would make a lot of difference to Gail.

The four of us had never been more at ease than during the weeks that followed. Gail and Hanna suddenly found a subject they could discuss without friction, for Gail wanted to know all about pregnancy, and Hanna said that Gail was so anxious to make up for lost time, talking about a large family, that you felt it was a *mitzvah* to explain things to her.

Art and I played chess; I usually won. We had discussions about religion and Israeli law. He usually won. One day I told him I thought marriage and divorce should be taken out of the jurisdiction of the rabbinical courts, and the Jewish laws which governed them modernized.

"Don't try to tidy up Jewish law," he answered. "Leave it as it is. You'll take the guts out of it. Either discard it altogether, or accept the anomalies too."

I accused Art of sophistry. Would he advocate similar laws in the States?

He chuckled. "That's what I'm coming to Israel for, to become a liberated reactionary."

I couldn't shake Art on this or other issues. He was a political hardliner, too. I told him he'd change his tune when he clashed with the real reactionaries, the nationalists and the clerics, when he found his freedoms menaced. He accused me of having come to Israel to escape my own Jewishness. We both enjoyed the fighting.

In the department it was less easy. Art was holding an invisible umbrella over my head to protect me from the fallout of his appointment. I didn't like being Art's protégé. I looked forward to the time when he would become an Israeli and cease enjoying the privileges of an outsider.

Art and Gail went off to Galilee to see the spring before she turned green herself, as she put it. Art said that they'd have to go back to the States to have the baby. Gail wanted it to have American nationality, and they wanted to be near both sets of grandparents. The following summer they'd come back, in time to get settled before the academic year.

On their return, Hanna asked Gail how she'd liked Galilee. Quite lovely, she said; in some places, with the spring flowers, it was almost like being in the Alps. Hanna and I exchanged a tolerant smile.

Art developed hay fever when the first dry hot weather began, but bore it as stoically as he had the damp cold of winter. Department tempers had cooled over the Passover vacation, and Ben Ishai had been offered a visiting lectureship at Chicago for the following year, so even he was polite when we met.

And then Art and I went for one of our Sabbath walks, like two old-age pensioners, I thought, given the pace. I reminded Art of something I'd just remembered, that at college I had been the provocative isolationist, Art the committed liberal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I thought this was funny, but Art wasn't listening. He stopped under an overhanging tree in one of the placid avenues near our building, and with no preamble announced, "I'm sorry, but I can't take the chair, after all."

I was surprised that I was not more surprised.

Art said, "I don't know how to explain it to you, but maybe you've guessed."

I said maybe I had.

"I want the post," said Art. "You know that. I wanted to stay. But in Galilee I saw how things were. I know what's going to happen when we get back to the States. And there's been an offer from Berkeley. She always wanted California. The money means nothing to me."

"I believe you," I said.

"You see," he added, "she'll need peace and quiet for a time, after the birth." He talked as if Gail were a frail consumptive and Jerusalem were Las Vegas. "Later on," he said, "we'll be freer to decide."

I disagreed, but said nothing. We strolled on, a couple of wise elders, with debris from the tree, dislodged by the hot *hamsin* wind, in our hair.

"I really like it here," said Art. It was valedictory.

He was getting very bald, I noticed.

Hanna thought I was making things too easy for Art. "At least tell him the way you feel. Why is that so complicated?" Hanna likes to spell things out, mental spring cleaning. I'm not like that. I can even see Art's point of view. Gail hasn't worn him down to the point where he resents it; not yet. Ought I to feel used and discarded? I don't think so. It has nothing to do with me. I feel sorry for Art.

However, I have bought a new briefcase.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World & President Carter

Walter Laqueur

AMONG the more engaging features of the American political system is the custom of extending wide indulgence to every incoming administration, both in foreign policy and in domestic affairs. For its part, every new administration also observes certain time-honored rituals, chief among them being the promise that under this dispensation all things will be different. Thus, it seemed only natural for President Carter upon assuming office to announce a "new American foreign policy for a new world" and for the new Secretary of State to proclaim a radical reversal of his predecessor's foreign policy ("highly compartmentalized and essentially static détente") as well as an end to what Mr. Brzezinski called "ideological warfare." The new administration in fact not only promised new solutions but also uncovered new problems and promised to solve them as well. The old conflicts (we were told) had become less acute, and there was a need to turn away from them and face the future.

Not all these pronouncements were purely ritualistic in origin. Many of the men and women who came to Washington in January of last year had been genuinely critical of U.S. foreign policy for years and were sincerely convinced that, given the opportunity, they could improve it. And this they still seem to feel themselves capable of doing. If at the end of his first year in office the President expressed surprise at the "intransigence and complexity" of a number of international problems, there have been as yet few similar admissions by his aides, most of whom seem to be satisfied with their policies and reasonably happy with their own performance

Their enthusiasm is not, however, shared by the majority of the American people, 52 per cent of whom, according to a recent Harris poll, have taken a negative view of the new administration's foreign policy. There have been growing complaints, most of them justified, about quick diplomatic successes that turn out to be spurious, about policies that show more consideration for America's enemies than for its allies, about a retreat from the high idealism of the early days to an aimless and inconsistent pragmatism.

The human-rights issue is as good an example as any of this kind of retreat. The President mentioned human rights no fewer than three times in his inaugural address, and soon thereafter he affirmed in a letter to Andrei Sakharov that "Human rights is a central concern of my administration. . . . We shall use our good offices to seek the release of prisoners of conscience." An Office of Coordinator for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs was set up, with a staff of some thirty people. Thus far, the office has been involved mainly in lodging complaints with various Latin American governments and the government of South Korea, and in advising cuts in assistance to countries like South Africa, Uruguay, Ethiopia, and Argentina. As far as they go, these are worthwhile efforts. But the real problem is not how to deal with South Korea; it is how to deal with countries like Uganda or Cambodia, in which there are no "prisoners of conscience" because the government simply murders its opponents, and with countries like the Soviet Union and some of its allies, in which the violation of human rights is an integral part of the political system.

THAT the human-rights policy would cause displeasure in the Kremlin was clear from the start. But it has also aroused opposition here at home from those who said that the new policy carried with it the risk of endangering détente, and that nothing was worth that risk. Thus, in one widely reprinted speech, David Riesman warned that an emphasis on human rights would inevitably revive the cold-war mentality, and all the dangers to humanity therein entailed. For this reason, much as he admired the courage of the Soviet dissidents, and much as he shared the values that inspired a man like Sakharov, Riesman said, he had consistently refused to sign petitions or to lend his name to any manifestation of protest in behalf of Russian dissenters.* Similar views, albeit more cautiously phrased, have been expressed by others, among them leading members of the administration, all

WALTER LAQUEUR is chairman of the Research Council of the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington and a contributing editor of COMMENTARY.

* Quoted here from *Commonweal*, November 11, 1977.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of whom share the basic assumption that an emphasis on human rights in U.S. foreign policy must somehow make a nuclear conflict more likely.

If this assumption were correct, the case of these critics would be unassailable, since human survival should obviously take precedence over other considerations. But the assumption happens to be wrong. The Soviet leaders do not regard the American human-rights policy as a form of warmongering, but simply as a counter-attack in the ongoing ideological struggle, and one that is quite inconvenient from their point of view, putting them, as it does, on the defensive. Soviet leaders have said countless times that, détente or no détente, ideological warfare with the West will continue unabated, but they regard this struggle as a one-way street: while they have the right, and indeed the duty, to attack the political and social system of the West, the West has no right to respond in kind, for its arguments are by definition mendacious and demagogic. American critics of a strong U.S. posture on human rights have tacitly accepted the Soviet interpretation of détente and simply refuse to recognize that a lasting understanding between the superpowers (as opposed to the short-term measures now envisaged) will become possible only after the Soviet political system has become more open. No one can say with confidence whether this will happen in our time, but it certainly will not be brought about by giving back to the Soviets their monopoly in the conduct of ideological warfare.

Critics of the administration's early emphasis on human rights were concerned not only with the supposed threat it posed to détente, but also with the supposed disruption it would cause in the balance of power within the Kremlin itself. Brezhnev, so the argument went, might soon be forced out of office by his illness, thereby giving more power to other, harder-line factions in the Soviet military-industrial complex. But the fact is that Brezhnev will not last forever in any case, and even if he should be replaced by a less moderate faction, there is no reason to assume that his successors would feel bound by earlier agreements. Moreover, although there are, to be sure, certain tactical differences among contending parties in the Kremlin, these differences do not affect essential Soviet policy. One can think of a great many arguments for or against stressing human rights in foreign policy, but to make one's stand depend on the state of Brezhnev's health, or on hypothetical power shifts in the Kremlin, is to reduce political debate to the kindergarten level.

The United States, in any case, has retreated very far from its original position on the human-rights question—this, despite the fact that European governments, after an initial half-heartedness, showed themselves quite willing to cooperate with President Carter's initiatives, and despite the fact too that public opinion throughout Europe was sympathetic to the human-rights issue from the very beginning. No one expected the new policy to produce quick results, and no one demanded that human rights be made the one and only condition of dealing with foreign governments. But some foresight and consistency, not to mention a bit more courage, could have been expected.

What, then, has been achieved so far? In a recent interview with *U.S. News and World Report*, Secretary of State Vance maintained that "anybody who has watched and seen what we have done and what the results have been—particularly in Latin America—would recognize that very substantial progress has been made." But has it? It is true that the lot of a handful of individuals imprisoned in a few countries has been alleviated, and that the new Office of Human Rights helped stall a loan to El Salvador until that regime moderated some of its practices. But these achievements have been purchased at a price that far outweighs the good they may have done.

No great courage is needed to denounce the crimes committed by South Africa—the United Nations does it once a week. But wherever the slightest risk has been involved, and occasionally also when the risk involved has been small or nonexistent, the administration has tended to retreat from its declared purpose. The Shcharansky case is a good example. Once President Carter had formally denied the allegation that Shcharansky was a CIA agent, there was nothing to prevent the U.S. from taking a strong stand against the Soviet treatment of this dissident, for instance by threatening not to participate in the Belgrade talks over the Helsinki accords; there is no doubt that the Soviet authorities would have retreated. Instead. the Russians were given to understand that American public opinion would not tolerate a *severe* sentence for Shcharansky, and the decision was made to proceed with the Belgrade charade. The administration was tested, and it failed the test. As a result, there have been more arrests in the Soviet Union, and the situation of political prisoners has actually deteriorated. The Soviet Union has learned that the United States is not really serious about human rights.

If the balance sheet on human rights after Carter's first year in office is thus far negative, what about the larger question of U.S.-Soviet relations in general?

From their first days in office, President Carter and his advisers declared that too much time and energy had been expended by past administrations on East-West relations. By now, however, there are clear signs that the administration recognizes that U.S.-Soviet relations impinge on most aspects of world affairs, and that the old problems will not vanish simply because a new set of officials

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would like them to. Thus, Washington is once more preoccupied with issues which have become, if anything, even more highly charged than they were previously.

One such problem, which can no longer be overlooked, is that of arms control and the Soviet military build-up. As the most recent Brookings Institution study on the subject puts it—in a tone of genuine bewilderment—"With each passing year it has become more difficult to explain the *continuing momentum in the Soviet* defense build-up." Indeed, the Soviet build-up *is* impossible to explain, at least on the basis of assumptions cherished by the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* or the Harvard-MIT arms-control seminar—namely, that there is no such thing as superiority in the arms race, and that the Russians, in any case, are not seeking it. To this day, the Secretary of State continues to maintain that the Soviets merely want nothing more than strategic parity—a view echoed by Professor George Kistiakowsky in a recent article in the New York *Times Magazine,* in which he warned that the baseless nightmares of the Committee on the Present Danger and other "hardliners" about Soviet intentions were leading the country into great peril. Professor Kistiakowsky urged the U.S. not to take too seriously the writings of Russian military experts about a winnable nuclear war, and advised the administration not to deploy new weapons systems lest they destabilize the situation and make mutual monitoring impossible. Instead, the highest priority should be given to a total nuclear test ban.

The weakness of this argument is that the Russians simply have not shown much interest in reducing their nuclear arsenal, as was demonstrated last March by their brusque reaction to President Carter's suggestions for mutual arms reductions. Nor have the Russians been troubled by the possible consequences of destabilization; whenever they could do so, they have introduced new weapons systems into the picture. In short, if some rough equilibrium of forces still exists between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, it is based not on Soviet actions, but rather on American technological superiority. If a new treaty were to be arrived at, permitting the Soviet Union to maintain its growing advantage, the resulting asymmetry would not only be immediately disadvantageous to the U.S., it would also make future arms agreements that much more difficult to obtain.

After the Soviet rejection of the original Carter plan last spring, the administration came up with a more modest formula calling for much smaller reductions in the arms ceilings, prohibition of mobile missiles for a three-year period, and a limitation over the next three years on the cruise missile, the one weapons system in which the U.S. still has a significant advantage and which is vital to the security of Europe. This new proposal was leaked to the press, thus causing a violent outcry on the part of the administration and some Senators and Congressmen—a curious response since the leaks, after all, did not involve national security but concerned matters that would soon be made public in any case. Those who complained most loudly, moreover, were the very people who only a short time before had been the sharpest critics of governmental secrecy, and the most passionate upholders of the public's right to know. What they apparently feared was that premature release of the new proposals would provoke opposition, and this in fact was exactly what happened.

For once, the opposition was not restricted to the United States, nor could it be attributed solely to the allegedly dubious motives of American hardliners. In Britain, especially, reaction to the news of a proposed limitation on cruise missiles was sharp. Thus, the *Economist* wrote on September 24:

> The U.S. is in the position of many great powers before it: it has to choose between an accommodation with its adversary and the confidence of its allies. It can stand ready to share the cruise missile, or it can run the very real risk of damaging the alliance on which its own security, as well as Europe's, depends.

And again even more emphatically on October 22:

> If this treaty results in a Russian missile strength not very different from what it probably would have been without any agreement at all (which is what the figures suggest) at the price of starting to unravel the Atlantic alliance, then the treaty will not be bad, but disastrous.

The London *Times* wrote on December 10:

> What is important at the moment is that Soviet-American negotiations should not preempt decisions which deeply affect European interests and require European participation. This has not happened yet, but it could happen in the future. . . . They [the Europeans] have good reason for being unsure.

Professor Lawrence Martin, one of Britain's leading military experts, said in an article last October that

> West Europeans should note that many Americans pushing for a complete ban really want to "denuclearize" U.S. alliance policy, limiting any use of nuclear weapons only to deter direct aggression against the United States. And Americans eager for nonproliferation should ponder what their allies might do for protection if American guarantees weakened.

And lastly, Lord Kennet, a Labor peer, in a letter to the London *Times* (December 15):

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> [Western Europe, Israel, Japan, India, etc.] are threatened by a class of weapons which does not threaten the U.S. If the United States does not choose to upset Russia by talking about the matter, we had better do so ourselves.

Similar voices were heard in other European countries, all expressing unease (to put it mildly) about the direction U.S. policy was taking.

The administration, in its turn, tried to reassure its allies and urge them not to overreact. Thus, Leslie Gelb, director of political-military affairs at the State Department, warned that "If you paint the Russians as ten feet tall, you have accomplished the basic purpose of Soviet foreign policy without their having to lift a finger." This is good advice as far as it goes, but beyond the issue of how Soviet might is perceived, there is, alas, the issue of hard facts and figures. When due allowance has been made for exaggeration and "worst-case analysis" on the part of the administration's critics, it is still true that in the last few years the Soviet Union has achieved advantages over the U.S. in throw-weight, megatonnage, and numbers of missiles and bombers; that in 1977 they gained advantages in equivalent weapons; and that under the SALT II proposals, the last U.S. advantage (in number of total warheads) would pass to them within no more than five or six years' time. To talk of the need for recognizing "the legitimate security interests of the Soviet Union" under these circumstances is pure anachronism; the Soviet Union's security interests were taken care of a long time ago, unless of course one happens to believe that the Soviet Union will not feel secure until it has a clear superiority all along the line. There can be no question about the desirability of a strategic arms agreement, but the administration, in its wish to conclude a treaty as quickly as possible, seems to have made concessions which serve neither American interests nor, for that matter, the cause of arms control.

IT HAS been said, and not without some truth, that mistakes in the field of defense planning need not be fatal; the consequences of such mistakes will not be felt for a number of years, and there may well be a chance to correct them somewhere along the way. The decisive issues in U.S.-Soviet relations are not, however, the purely technical ones described above. Rather, they concern our basic assessment of Soviet policies and intentions. Confusion in these areas is potentially far more dangerous; and some recent statements by administration spokesmen tend to confirm the impression that there is indeed a great deal of such confusion.

Take, for instance, two recent statements by Marshall Shulman, who is both special adviser on Soviet affairs to the Secretary of State and head of President Carter's Interagency Committee on Soviet policy, and whose pronouncements therefore must be taken as a key to thinking in the White House and the administration. In an article in *Foreign Affairs* published in 1976, Professor Shulman provided advice on "Learning to Live with Authoritarian Regimes." The article was not, as one might have supposed from its title, devoted to Afghanistan or Morocco, but rather to the Soviet Union. It is hard to believe that this blurring of the enormous difference between authoritarian and totalitarian regimes was an accident, or that it was unconnected with the general drift of the Carter administration's position in world affairs. A more recent policy statement by Professor Shulman before the House International Relations Committee (October 31, 1977), though couched in more cautious terms, included assumptions about our relations with the Soviets that simply will not survive critical analysis:

> At the philosophical level, we believe that there can be a useful dialogue between societies that start from the needs of the society and emphasize the fulfillment of material needs, and those that start from the dignity and worth of the individual and emphasize the fulfillment of political rights.

Now, there may indeed be room for agreement on any number of matters between the two superpowers. But can it seriously be maintained that a "dialogue" is at all feasible between two societies, one of which is open and the other closed? Professor Shulman may meet with Dr. Arbatov or some other spokesman of the Soviet dictatorship at Pugwash or some other place, and may indeed have a discussion with him over issues of policy, but no dialogue is possible between the two societies, since Soviet *society* cannot freely express itself. It is ironic that a few weeks after Professor Shulman's statement, U.S. diplomats in Moscow were instructed by the State Department to limit their contacts with Soviet citizens so as not to endanger overall diplomatic relations. So much, then, for the famous "dialogue." Still more dangerous is Professor Shulman's contrasting of individual human rights and "economic" rights as though the two were mutually exclusive. Democratic government, by definition, cannot possibly neglect the "needs of the society," whereas a dictatorship can do so with impunity. It would be interesting to know what the result would be if Soviet society were given the choice between missiles and consumer goods—but unfortunately Soviet society is not consulted about its "needs."

To belittle the crucial differences between a free society and an unfree society is a serious matter. The Soviet Union may be weaker than we think, it may even be less aggressive, or its economic performance may be stronger than we think, but it certainly is not more open than we think.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Politicians may ignore the views of their advisers, they may even sometimes reach correct conclusions on the basis of false premises (just as a mysterious force sometimes protects sleepwalkers). But to build a policy based on misconceptions about the Soviet political system is bound to cause trouble.

EUROPEAN misgivings about the future of the Atlantic alliance stem from the belief that sooner or later the defense of Europe will have to be based on the cruise missile and that Washington seems either to ignore this fact or not to care. Some of these fears were dispelled, temporarily at least, by the Secretary of Defense on his trip to Europe last November, but uncertainties still remain about American intentions and particularly about American economic policies. Indeed, economic issues are among the most urgent problems facing the U.S. in its relations with allies. Concluding his economic summit meeting last May in London, President Carter reported complete unanimity between himself and European leaders. No such unanimity would be possible today, with the dollar having dropped some 11 per cent in proportion to the Deutsche mark and about twice as much in comparison with the yen during the last year.

Although this drop does not concern them overly since it facilitates American exports, administration spokesmen have offered various explanations for it. The fall of the dollar, they say, is the result of speculation; the yen and the mark were undervalued; Japan and West Germany, in contrast to the U.S., have not done enough to reflate the world economy. Some of these arguments contain a grain of truth, but the American policy of "malign neglect" (to quote unkind critics) has also been quite shortsighted and irresponsible. The upward valuation of the mark and the yen can hardly contribute toward a reflation of the world economy. What it can do is help reduce American losses caused by the growing U.S. trade deficit (about $30 billion at present), which is itself the result of still increasing oil imports. Indeed, continuing American dependence on these imports is an unmitigated disaster whose effects are bound to be felt abroad no less than at home. Such dependence has made it more difficult to freeze the price of oil; if the value of the dollar falls even further, and if the price of oil goes up, the countries mainly affected will be the ones least able to afford it.

What if the European banks, having supported the dollar in the past, were to use their holdings to buy up American corporations? Such a development might be welcomed by some in the U.S., but it would surely be resented by many others, and it would certainly cause further complications in relations between the U.S. and its allies. The policy, in other words, of viewing the depreciation of the dollar as an "offshore problem" can perhaps be justified as a short-term palliative; but if this policy is maintained for any length of time, it is bound to create a worldwide currency crisis with incalculable economic and political consequences.

There are legitimate conflicts of interest between America and its main trading partners which will not be easily resolved, if in fact they can be resolved at all. But so far, the attempt has not even been made—the dangers of protectionism and a shrinking in world trade have simply been ignored. President Carter has recently promised intervention to prevent a further decline in the value of the dollar. It remains to be seen whether this declaration will be followed up by determined action.

TURNING from Europe to the Middle East, one cannot deny that American freedom of action there has been rather severely curtailed. But even granting the limitations built into the Middle East situation, the performance of the administration must be judged as gravely wanting.

While the Middle East situation is certainly dangerous, and bound to remain so for a long time, this is only in part because of the Arab-Israeli conflict. On the other hand, it has been obvious for quite a while that there is no imminent danger of war in the Middle East except perhaps at the fringes, between Algeria and Morocco, say, or in the unlikely event of direct Soviet intervention. The Carter administration must be aware of this, yet official Washington has nevertheless relentlessly turned out speeches, declarations, and admonitions to the effect that the Arab-Israeli conflict is the most burning issue on the international scene (in a speech in California not too long ago, President Carter even put it ahead of the SALT talks in his list of priorities). And all this at a time when a real war was under way in Africa, and when there was a danger of political changes in Europe having far graver potential consequences than anything that could conceivably happen in the Middle East.

This single-minded concentration on the Arab-Israeli conflict at the expense of all other problems did not, of course, begin with President Carter, but his administration has approached the conflict with even greater zeal and more glaring misconceptions than those of its predecessors. Though it should have been clear that the step-by-step approach chosen, perhaps instinctively, by Henry Kissinger was the only way to reduce tensions in the area, the new administration, under the compulsion to come up with novel approaches, opted for a policy which would at best have led to an impasse, and at worst to disaster. Geneva was the worst possible forum for peacemaking in the Middle East; the inevitable failure there would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

almost certainly have increased tensions in the area.

If the road to peace does not lead through Geneva, it has been clear for a long time that there was a chance to break the deadlock if Israel were able to reach a *modus vivendi* with one Arab country; and it was equally clear that, given the weakness of Jordan, this country could only be Egypt.* It is perhaps regrettable that the initiative came from Cairo rather than Jerusalem, but perhaps—again—it could not have been otherwise. This is not to say for a certainty that the present negotiations will prove successful, or that, even if they do, the Arab-Israeli conflict will be resolved. But even if the present talks should fail or be sabotaged, they surely indicate the proper direction for future peace-making efforts in the Middle East.

As for bringing the Soviet Union into the process (a step for which no one in Washington seems at present eager to claim credit), this remains altogether incomprehensible, even with the benefit of hindsight. A comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East may well be impossible without the Soviet Union, but since the Soviet Union has no interest whatsoever in any such peace, except perhaps on terms that would be unacceptable not only to Israel but also to the other main participants, including the United States, what point could there have been in reintroducing the Soviets into the situation? If nothing else, the Soviet reaction to President Sadat's recent peace initiative (comparing him, among other things, to Hitler) should have provided a salutary lesson. The Soviet leaders may have suffered a temporary setback in the Middle East, but at least they, in contrast to Washington's Arabists, have mastered the elementary lesson of politics: to support one's friends, rather than trying to be on good terms with all the participants in a conflict.

WHY did the administration assume that the Russians would be "helpful"? Why did it fail to realize that the overall aim of U.S. policy in the Middle East should have been the prevention of war, rather than the pursuit of a goal which, under present circumstances, was a mere chimera? At the moment these questions may be purely academic, which makes them no less disturbing. For what is at stake are not just some tactical errors of judgment but a basic misreading of the Middle Eastern situation. To be sure, there have been signs of a more realistic approach in U.S. policy in the Middle East in the form of a new understanding that since the Rejection Front does not want a peaceful settlement in any case, no time should be wasted in futile efforts to gain its good will. But not everyone in Washington has arrived at this new understanding, and backsliding is still possible.

IF THE Carter administration's Middle East policy has suffered from a surfeit of misguided activism, its policy in the Far East seems to have suffered from the opposite. The charge of having neglected Japan, made by Zbigniew Brzezinski and other members of the Trilateral Commission against the former administration, can be made with equal validity against the Carter administration in its first year in office. If anything, unease in Japan has actually increased under the present administration, following President Carter's decision to withdraw all American ground forces from Korea over the next few years. The impending withdrawal is regarded not only as the possible prelude to another Far Eastern war, but also as the beginning of an American retreat from the Western Pacific—a policy which, whether deliberate or not, is bound to lead to a realignment of forces in the Far East, with Japan moving into either the Soviet or the Chinese orbit, or perhaps opting for heavily armed neutrality.

Such scarcely trifling consequences have not, however, been sufficient to deflect the advocates of withdrawal from their course; if "most Koreans" are seeking a peaceful, reunited Korea, the argument goes, who are we to insist on a divided Korea? The fact that "reunification" is unlikely to be peaceful has not often been mentioned. More recently, the administration's Far East experts seem to have accepted what should have been obvious from the beginning—namely, that even a neo-isolationalist policy like the proposed U.S. withdrawal requires an overall strategy, and that more is required for the accomplishment of an orderly retreat—in both the military and political arenas—than a bit of tinkering here and there.

U.S. policy toward China has similarly suffered from an absence of clear guidelines. Yes (it was said), recognition of Peking is our aim, but not an urgent one, and yes, we also have a commitment to Taiwan. Secretary Vance journeyed to Peking, but the purpose of his trip is not quite clear to this day—it certainly has not contributed to an improvement in relations between the two countries, or even to a clarification of the issues under dispute. To the thorny issue of Taiwan there is admittedly no easy answer, but Taiwan, so far as the Chinese are concerned, can wait; they are far more interested in U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union, about which there has thus far been no meetings of minds. According to U.S. envoys, the Chinese take, or pretend to take, the Soviet "threat" far too seriously. The Chinese, on the other hand, as they made clear to subsequent visitors, believe that the makers of American foreign policy are either not very bright or not

* This argument was developed in these pages in my article "Peace with Egypt?" (March 1974).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

very brave, and that little will be gained by establishing closer relations with the United States—with the possible exception of the economic field.*

It has been said that the greatest changes in U.S. policy during the Carter administration have taken place in Africa, but this is an exaggeration, for present American policy in Africa was first outlined in Kissinger's Lusaka address in April 1976, in which he criticized South Africa and declared the Rhodesian government to be illegal. To be sure, this African policy has been further elaborated under the present administration. It is now maintained that Africa should be supported as a whole rather than allowed to break into fragments, and that Africa should be left alone to solve its own problems. These are both desirable prescriptions, but, unfortunately, African nationalism *is* fragmented—the Afras, for instance, are even now turning against the Issas (and this despite the fact that no one had heard of either one until last year). Nor is the decision to leave Africa alone solely in our hands. In the existing power vacuum, the pressure of a few hundred, let alone a few thousand, foreign "experts" or soldiers can make a world of difference, as was shown by the case of Angola. Zaire, too, in the absence of American support, might well have been taken over but for the decision of the French and the Moroccans to step in. Meanwhile, there has been fairly massive Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, and the Cubans show every indication of staying where they are.

We have been told by Andrew Young not to get paranoid about a few Communists, but how few are few? According to Ambassador Young, their number in Angola was at one time around 50,000, which by Chinese standards may not be many, but by the standards of warfare in Africa is a massive force. We were assured that the Soviet Union would not reap major gains in Africa but would, on the contrary, get trapped in a quagmire as the U.S. had done in Vietnam. Moreover, to cite Ambassador Young again, once the fighting stopped and the trading began, we would be the beneficiaries, for many African countries would then move from the Soviet Union toward the United States. Some of this has in a sense come to pass: since the Soviet Union cannot provide the economic and technical assistance many of its African clients need, they are only too eager to obtain it from the United States, presumably with Soviet blessing. But if talk of "Marxism" in Africa is foolish, so is the idea that the Soviets have suffered any setbacks there. Rather, the Soviet Union—because it has had no hesitation about engaging in intervention by proxy—has considerably strengthened its position in many parts of Africa whereas the United States, except where South Africa is concerned, has adhered to a strict policy of nonintervention. It is one thing to argue that America's policy of passivity in Africa has been unavoidable, given the mood of Congress and the predictable outcries in the media. But to claim that this policy has been a huge success is fatuous nonsense.†

So far as policy toward Cuba itself is concerned, one can express little but bewilderment. If a reasonably persuasive case could have been made for recognizing Cuba and renewing trade (a euphemism for subsidizing the Cuban economy and alleviating the Soviet burden) before Cuba decided to intervene in Africa or was commissioned to do so, no such case can be made now—or so it would seem. Yet amazement must be recorded at the administration's continued willingness to normalize relations with Cuba even after the massive involvement in Angola was under way. It took several months before policy-makers reluctantly accepted the fact that little progress could be expected on the diplomatic front so long as the military intervention continued. Meanwhile, the U.S. delegation in the United Nations has worked closely with the Cubans in preparing a resolution condemning Chile for various human-rights violations. Such condemnation may well be deserved, but it issues forth rather strangely from Cuba, a country with more political prisoners, and less freedom, than even Chile can boast. Which takes us back to where we began—the assertion by Secretary of State Vance of "very substantial" progress on human rights, especially in Latin America. . . .

CAN anything be said to the credit of the administration's record in foreign policy? The obvious answer is that the world cannot be changed in a year, and that certain of the Carter initiatives—like the Panama Canal treaty, for instance—ought to be welcomed. The administration has been on the right track in trying to slow down nuclear proliferation and the arms trade and cannot fairly be faulted if these attempts have not been successful. Nor can the State Department or the White House be held responsible for all the setbacks in foreign affairs. While Congress may have saved the administration from making mistakes on the SALT negotiations, its inability to agree on an energy program, combined with the pressure of the protectionist lobby, has certainly weakened the U.S. posture abroad. A measure of blame, too, for certain policy failures undoubtedly lies with America's allies who still are not pulling their weight in the economic field (Japan) and in defense (Western Europe). Finally, despite setbacks, NATO is in slightly better shape now than it has been in years past. There is even

* For a fuller discussion of these matters, see Chalmers Johnson's "Carter in Asia: McGovernism without McGovern" in last month's issue of COMMENTARY.

† See the article by Bayard Rustin and Carl Gershman "Africa, Soviet Imperialism, and the Retreat of American Power," in the October 1977 issue of COMMENTARY.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a growing awareness in Washington that the Soviet Union will only agree to halt its military build-up when it realizes the other side is determined to match it.

And yet there remains reason for concern, for thus far, at least, it is difficult to discern any clear idea of America's role in world affairs. In fact, what makes it so difficult to comment now about U.S. foreign policy is the absence of any clear concept; instead one faces vague trends and contradictory statements at frequent intervals, a source of bewilderment to friend and foe alike. Though neo-isolationism seems to have fallen out of fashion in recent days, there is a great deal of confusion as to what America is legitimately entitled to do in defense of its vital interests.

A new generation is making its presence felt in the upper and middle echelons in Washington—the generation whose outlook was largely formed by the experience of the Vietnam war. While many of these young policy-makers have come to realize that the world is different from Senator McGovern's vision of it, others have not yet achieved such wisdom. It is not so much the lack of intellectual brilliance or original ideas which is worrisome, though these qualities do not seem to be in very ample supply. The problem lies elsewhere—in a kind of crisis of adaptation, one might say. The dead hand of Vietnam still weighs heavily on the American memory, and the fear of involvement in some dubious foreign adventure still clouds much of the thinking of official Washington. It is the old story of the cat which, once burned, never approached a stove again.

Apart from the Vietnam trauma, a curious parochialism seems to be in the American air, a tendency to analyze world problems solely in terms of the American experience which ends up muddying rather than clarifying the issues. The dividing line is no longer between hardliners and doves, between "interventionists" and those opposed to intervention. Rather, it is between the acceptance and the rejection of political reality as the basis for political action. One can only hope that something short of a major crisis will bring a sense of political reality into play for those who still need to learn a proper respect for its intractable force.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Zeppelin

A Memoir

Chaim Raphael

In a thicket sprinkled with morning, where each leaf
Burned green, hot as a newly minted coin. . . .
PETER DAVISON, *The Breaking of the Day*

IF IT was a dark night on the way back from Hebrew class, the Kaiser might be lurking around a corner in his spiked helmet waiting to pounce on you. Bright moonlight could be even worse. This was the kind of night, they said, on which a Zeppelin could come. We had never had one yet, in our little seaside town on the northeast coast of England, but we had heard what they had done to London. The Kaiser was bad enough, but he was, after all, human. The Zeppelin was something in the sky—like God. If it suddenly appeared, there could be no escape. It would be like one of those terrible punishments in the Bible that God was always threatening if the children of Israel were sinful. I knew so many of these verses by heart, translating a chapter or two of the Bible to my father at night, after supper. If we were wicked enough, the way the children of Israel were always wicked and rebellious in the Wilderness, this was the way God's voice would be heard: a German Zeppelin would float into the sky, some tremendous thunder and lightning would strike from it, and we would perish.

There were so many sins that could bring this about. We might eat pork; we might mix up meat and milk dishes; worst of all, we might break one of the laws of the Sabbath. Of course we would never do this *deliberately*: we would be fully on guard against sins as obvious as striking a match on the Sabbath or carrying something through the streets. But we might commit a Sabbath sin accidentally, which could bring the same punishment. We might tear a piece of paper while turning the pages of a book; more terrible still, it might be a *holy* book, something with Hebrew writing on it. There were even worse accidents possible—things almost too terrible to think of. Suppose my father, holding up the Scroll of the Law after the reading in synagogue, let it fall. One could hear God's voice thundering: "*Because ye have defiled My sanctuary and destroyed My Holy Name. . . .*" And in the same second one could hear the clap of thunder and see the walls of our little synagogue crumbling into dust.

It seemed unreal at home, with Father listening to my translation approvingly, stroking his beautiful George V beard. In the background, my brothers and sisters would be busy with their quarreling and homework, while Mother bustled with the clearing up after supper. Home was safe; and even synagogue, where the awful warnings and curses were solemnly chanted, was normally a cheerful place, full of chatter and argument. It was only at night, and out alone, that terror sometimes came to the surface.

APART FROM the Kaiser and the Zeppelin, everything else about the war was sheer delight. Each day brought excitement and adventure. I had never known any existence without the war, but I realized even then that it was the war I had to thank for so much of the fun of my life.

Most wonderful of all was half-day school. Two schools had amalgamated, because of the shortage of teachers. My group went only in the mornings, which left us free every afternoon without teachers, parents, Hebrew school, or anything. Every day found us after dinner on the sand dunes, or climbing the cliffs. It wasn't just that we were free and happy; the war itself gave us endless games. The steep roads down to the beaches were barricaded with barbed-wire entanglements, to prevent a landing. There were huts and fences, and all kinds of useful material—barrels, tentpoles, corrugated sheets, tarpaulins. There were trenches and piles of sandbags, with anti-aircraft guns in their emplacements. Sometimes soldiers would be training on the beach; at other times we would stand by watching the Coast Guard at work; but mostly we would be on our own, using anything we liked for our games. The long stone pier at the end of the harbor had been shut to civilians, but for us there were ways of climbing through or over the barriers, so that the enemy and the defenders could take up their positions, fighting battles that might last a whole afternoon, until a guard or a policeman would suddenly appear to send us all to flight.

CHAIM RAPHAEL, a long-time contributor to COMMENTARY, is the author of *The Walls of Jerusalem, Memoirs of a Special Case,* and *A Feast of History.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Once, some of us actually climbed from the pier onto a minesweeper that was moored there. Willie Fisher hid in one of the lifeboats and said he was going to stay there until the ship sailed. He climbed out quickly enough when we heard the sailors coming, but I believed for a moment that he might really have stowed away. For Willie, my best friend, was always doing really brave things—as when we fought the gypsy boys. The gypsies had an encampment in the fields behind the beach. We were frightened of the gypsies, but sometimes hid in the cornfields nearby to spy on them. One could watch them for hours, with their dark faces and bright red shirts and scarves, moving around quietly—secretly—in front of their caravan, their horses cropping quietly at one side, while at the open fire a young woman—strangely like my oldest sister—cooked their dinner. But what went on inside the caravan? That was the great mystery. I crawled nearer one day and was suddenly attacked by three young gypsy boys who began beating me on the head and back with sticks. I crouched on the ground, my head in my arms, the blows falling, when all at once there was a shout and Willie was there, pulling, punching. I was on my feet, and in a minute we were away and safe.

WILLIE and I sat together in the same double-desk at school. He was tall for his age, and fair. I was shortish, dark, and—as I know now from old photographs—with large brown eyes. We were a good pair at school because Willie was very poor at schoolwork—bored with every minute of it—while I could help him. I found everything easy and was Miss Freeman's favorite. Miss Freeman, our teacher, was in my eyes dazzlingly beautiful. She was rather plump with a creamy skin. She had large coils of hair piled on her head, and always wore a white blouse and dark skirt. When she stopped behind us at our desk to look at what we were writing, she would sigh at Willie's work and then, looking at mine, would run her hand softly through my hair. I could always feel her leaning on me from behind. It was a nice feeling. No one ever touched me in this pleasant way at home. We never kissed there, as I saw other parents and children doing. My mother was far too busy with her seven children and with the visitors who were always dropping in for tea or meals. Home, though it was safe, was also a battleground. We watched each other with great care, jealous for the extras that might be secured—a book, a magazine, a second helping of *tzimmes*, a piece of cake. There were battles, alliances, triumphs, and defeats. But at school, with Miss Freeman smiling lazily at me, it was different. Once I stole a rose from our garden and gave it to her. She put it in a glass of water on her desk. It was our secret.

I never said much at home about what went on at school. No one would have cared. I was the fifth child of the seven; everything seemed to turn on what was happening to the others, especially my two big brothers. I listened avidly for what the older children said, and even more for what they didn't say. All had their secret lives, and parts of them gradually emerged as I listened: amazing things, grown-up things. Most particularly I listened silently—fearfully, sometimes—to the angry talk between my father and my brothers. His face in anger frightened me. They were always doing the wrong things. It made me anxious to insure that my own guilty secrets didn't come out.

One secret I was afraid to reveal was that my best friend at school was Willie Fisher. I had a good reason for keeping him away from our house, though sometimes I went to his. It was not just that he was non-Jewish; there was something far worse, making him supremely taboo: his father was a "pork butcher." A pork butcher sold all forms of pig products, sausages, and black "blood" puddings. Like many pork butchers in England, Willie's father was a German. His shop, just down the road from us, still had a sign on it with his name in the original spelling: *Fischer: Pork Butcher.* Willie told me that in 1914, at the outbreak of the war with Germany, the people of our town had smashed the Fisher shop windows and pelted the children with stones in the street. This kind of thing had happened all over England. Mr. Fisher had been interned; the family had had to go away, and had lived for a little while with an aunt in the country. Later in the war Mr. Fisher, with two sons now in the British Army, had been released from internment and had gone to work on a farm close by. His wife and Willie had gone back to live above the shop, whose windows were now boarded up. Mrs. Fisher was always nice to me when I went there, but at the back of my mind I felt guilty. The word "pork" on the sign outside seemed to be engraved in letters of fire.

THE FRIENDS whose existence *could* be admitted were, naturally, the children of the Jewish congregation which my father served as Cantor. My closest Jewish friend—partly because their house was very near—was Sammy Woolf, whose father, Joe Woolf, kept a pawnshop in the old part of town by the port.

The Woolfs were very different from us. For one thing, they were rich. They were so rich, in fact, that they had electric light, which you could turn on with a switch at the door. In *our* house, gas mantles had to be carefully lit with a match or a taper from the fire. And whereas my mother did all the cooking and baking and a million other things, helped only by my sisters and fat old Mrs. Moxon who came in for the rough cleaning, Mrs. Woolf had a real maid—a plump country girl called Elsie, who baked scones in the afternoon and took tea in to Mrs. Woolf on a tray. I haunted their kitchen, where Elsie stuffed me with scones and strawberry jam; there was always a delicious smell of flour and baking around her. Mrs. Woolf was friendly too, but rather stately. She was, after

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all, the wife of the president of the congregation; and Mr. Woolf was, in addition, a town councillor, so that *non-Jews* would sometimes visit their house for formal teas on Sunday afternoons. Sammy would be taken in to be shown off on these occasions, while I hung around happily in the kitchen with Elsie. But he was very offhand when I asked him about it. It never seemed to him at all odd that their house could at the same time be Jewish and yet open to non-Jewish visitations. To me, home was by definition a Jewish fortress. Non-Jewish people had no place there, any more than in synagogue.

But this was only part of the different life that the Woolfs led, and which made them so exciting. They had broken through all kinds of barriers. Their shop was kept open on *shabbes*; their children went to the pictures on *shabbes* (I never went at all); they had a maid; they had non-Jewish visitors; and they had electric light. The councillor himself looked like a typical north-country Englishman—stout, with ruddy cheeks and a big drooping black mustache. But in many ways he was still a traditional Jew from the old country. He had been a *yeshivah bocher*—a Talmud student—in early life. He loved sitting down with my father to go through a page of the Talmud, with the rabbinical commentaries, while they waited for a *minyan* (a quorum of ten) to begin prayers on *shabbes* afternoon. It never seemed odd that he had just walked across to the synagogue from his shop. For *him*, the breaking of the Sabbath was overlooked. He was so obviously a complete Jew that it didn't matter.

I loved listening to the men talking in synagogue on *shabbes* afternoons while they waited for dusk and the *ma'ariv* service. If Councillor Woolf and my father were not running through a passage from the Midrash or the Talmud together, they would be joining in with the others in talk about the war, and most particularly about the fighting in Palestine. General Allenby's campaign to win back the Holy Land from the pagans was a situation they were completely at home with. It had happened before with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and then again with Joshua and King David. I knew the place-names myself from the weekly Bible readings, and listened eagerly. Sons of our congregation were actually in the British Army *with* Allenby, fighting like the old children of Israel. It was almost as if the Messiah were on his way. I can recall the style of conversation perfectly as Mr. Woolf and my father exchanged verses, with others joining in.

"It says in the Newcastle *Chronicle* that they've taken Beersheba."

"I suppose they will still use the well that Isaac found there."

My father would nod approvingly. "Rashi says that all those wells that Isaac's servants dug *before* Beersheba—at Esek, and Sitnah, and Rehovot—were really places for study—'wells of the Torah'—and that is why God appeared there to him and promised that his seed would inherit the land."

"If you ask me," Mr. Woolf says, "Rashi made up half his stories. How did he know?"

"How did he know?" says my father. "It's in the Bible. Everything is in the Bible."

"I had a letter today from my son," one of the congregants says proudly. "He met some Jews who actually live in Palestine, at a place called Gihonah."

"There you are," my father says. "That must be Gihon, from the Book of Kings. *And King David said: Mount my son Solomon on my own mule and take him down to Gihon.*"

Mr. Woolf joins in: *"And let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel."*

"What will happen when Allenby wins?" a congregant asks. "Perhaps a new Jewish king will be anointed in Gihon like King Solomon."

"Will all the Jews go back to the Holy Land?" says another, *"Next Year in Jerusalem?"*

My father is doubtful. "We must wait for the Messiah," he says, stroking his beard. *"Then* we go back."

"I will go anyhow to see Jerusalem," Mr. Woolf says firmly. "Ah, we have a *minyan*. What kept you so long, Goldberg? Let us say *ma'ariv*. I have to go back to the shop."

I sit listening, open-mouthed. For the moment the Kaiser—and even the Zeppelin—had ceased to threaten.

I RARELY played with Sammy Woolf during the week because, being rich, he went to a smart fee-paying school. But he came to *cheder* (Hebrew school) three nights a week, which gave us a chance, if we walked home together, to talk about Dolly, his only sister—a "big girl," already turned sixteen, very pretty, and, as everybody agreed, a real devil. Talking about Dolly was part of our endless conversation about girls and babies. We exchanged such information as we were gathering, while at the same time we speculated about what the older members of our family were up to, especially in this regard.

Our talk—in north-country ("Geordie") singsong—was an attempt to outdo each other in revelations.

"Dolly and your brother Simon are sweethearts," Sammy told me once.

"Go on!"

"Why aye! I saw them behind the Moor Rock last Wednesday afternoon."

"Ye couldna have! I was playing near the rock with Willie Fisher and I didn't see anything."

"Well *I* did. I saw them both. They were kissing each other."

"I though it was Dannie she was keen on." Dannie was my other big brother.

"Oh, she was. But Dolly is always out with dif-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ferent boys. I saw her on the sands with Tommy Thompson's big brother George."

"*Kissing* him! He's a *goy*!"

"Oh, Dolly's terrible. My father beat her with a strap."

"How do you know?"

"I heard her crying. She told me she's going to run away to London."

"Go on!"

It was quite true that my big brothers Dannie and Simon were rivals. I could understand them quarreling over Dolly: they quarreled over everything. The whole family was very argumentative, but with Dannie and Simon the quarrels, and the raised voice of my father, went over into anger, black anger. It always sounded to me like the quarrels in the Bible—the rebellion of Korah, the anger of Moses, and the wrath of God. And if now Dolly had jilted Dannie, who was her own age, for Simon, just over a year older, it could be frightening. The quarrels always started this way. Simon would do something clever to get Dannie down. Dannie would respond with something wild. I always felt rivalry in the air with these two.

They never quarreled over *me*. I was their slave, but they did such wonderful things for me. Dannie would take me swimming and, by the force of his own example, would get me to plunge into the roaring waves from the beach, or dive in from the rocks. He was a most powerful swimmer, and absolutely fearless. Simon took me climbing for gulls' eggs in the cliffs, and once he took me into the shipyard at Jarrow, nearby, where he had begun to work as an apprentice engineer. He showed me the skeleton of the ship, with the great plates laid; all around us were the myriad crane arms, the clanging of rivets, and the hoot of gray warships going up and down the river. I was almost too excited to sleep that night. And now Simon had got Dolly away from Dannie. He must have tricked her away somehow. It was like Jacob and Esau—or like Laban's trick over Jacob with Rachel and Leah. Something terrible would happen. Dannie was wild.

But it was Friday now, when one stopped worrying. Mother had been baking all Thursday as usual, and cooking all Friday. The huge pans and dishes were ready—fish (fresh from the sea that morning) for Friday night; *cholent* (a baked stew) to be kept warm for Saturday dinner after synagogue. The house was spotless. The men of the family—including me—were off to synagogue for the evening service. All except the baby would be sitting down for supper later, eight at table in all, unless Father also brought home a stranger from synagogue, as he often did.

Since a camp had been opened at Hartley Moor, a few miles away, there was almost always a Jewish soldier or two in synagogue on Friday evenings. When Father invited them, they accepted quickly, probably homesick for *gefillte* fish. To us it was like a raffle each week to see whom we would get. It was especially exciting when it was an officer, with his brown leather shoulder-straps crossing over to the belt which held his revolver.

On this particular Friday, we had been lucky in a way none of us could have expected. A soldier had come back with us and was sitting patiently through the preliminary blessings as if he were an ordinary Jew. He was an officer; his badges and leather straps shone in the candlelight. But he was no ordinary Jew; he had introduced himself in synagogue with a name that had dazzled us: Lieutenant Rothschild. A Rothschild! In our house! My father sang on: "*Sholom aleichem malachei hashores. . . .*" "Peace unto *you,* ministering angels. . . ." We looked at the soldier and looked at each other excitedly. *Lieutenant Rothschild*—the magic name for all Jews. The wine was blessed. The bread was cut. We sat down to eat.

My sisters, who did all the serving, bustled shyly around the visitor from another planet. For a Rothschild, he seemed rather hungry. He wolfed the food down, praising it heartily, accepting a second and third helping with cheerful grace, talking with an important air, as he ate, of the army, his service in the trenches in France, and his own family. It seemed almost incredible that a Rothschild should be so like the rest of us. We listened eagerly for something that would be different, something rich, something almost royal, as befitted a Rothschild. It never seemed to occur to any of us, remote from the world in our little northern town, that perhaps there were Rothschilds who weren't Rothschilds. No one asked questions too pointedly. We listened open-mouthed.

He had now settled back, with the meal over, loosening his belt for comfort, and still talking while the dishes were cleared away. At that moment there was a knock at the door. "Come in," my father called. The door opened, and Dolly Woolf stood there, plump, pretty, and simpering. It was clear that she had heard about the Rothschild, and had come to see for herself.

Dannie and Simon both got up. Dolly smiled at them, with a sly look at the same time toward the soldier.

"Hallo, Dolly," my mother said. "Would you like some tea and cake?"

"Oh, let me help with the clearing up," Dolly said, following my sisters into the kitchen. My eyes darted around—watching my brothers, watching Dolly, watching the lieutenant. All these grown-ups—they gave each other strange looks. Someone would ask an ordinary question and get a short, angry reply for no reason that I could understand.

My younger sister was being pushed off to bed. I pleaded for and won a respite. My father had taken out a Bible to run through the chapters for the next day's reading in synagogue. I sat near him, watching.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Dolly was now sitting next to the Rothschild, sipping her tea, flickering her eyelids. Dannie got up abruptly and went out, slamming the door. Simon had picked up a book and was reading.

Lieutenant Rothschild looked at his watch and rose. "I must get back to camp," he said. "Very strict in the army, you know. Even officers have to be in on time." He stood, adjusting his belts. Somehow he had become less heroic during the evening.

"I must go as well," Dolly said gaily. "Mother said I mustn't be late." She turned to the lieutenant. "If you're going toward Hartley Moor, you pass our house."

"Then I'll accompany you," the Rothschild said, smiling.

He shook hands with us all and thanked my mother and father. The door closed behind him and Dolly, and a peace came over the room again. It had been strange. *Shabbes* had been disturbed, somehow. I was glad he had gone.

SATURDAY morning was normally a heavenly time. There was an early cup of tea and a piece of *shabbes* cake available in the kitchen, and none of the rush of weekdays, with everybody in each other's way. On *shabbes* we could sleep late. Still better, we could take our tea upstairs and read in bed.

But this morning, though it was *shabbes* and a bright summer's day, there were clouds of anger in the house. I was woken by the sound of my brothers quarreling in the room they shared next to mine, and then, above their voices, I heard my father shouting at them. Perhaps it was late and they were not ready for the early morning service that I was allowed to miss. I heard Mother's voice asking Father not to get angry; he replied roughly. What had gone wrong? Was it Lieutenant Rothschild? Dolly? I snuggled back into the warm downy bed, hoping to stay safe from the noise.

In the synagogue itself, later, things became normal again. There was excited talk among the men at news in the paper of the capture of some town in Palestine. And inevitably there was the other side of the war, too, when Mr. Isaacs got up to say *kaddish*—the memorial prayer—for his son. The news had come that week that Monty Isaacs, nineteen years old, had been killed in France. As Mr. Isaacs said the *kaddish*, slowly, the tears streaming down his face, I heard weeping from the women in the gallery. These scenes had become usual to me. Every day there were rows of small photographs in the papers, pictures of young men —all looking alike—*Killed in Action* . . . .

There was a Bar Mitzvah that morning in *shul*, and a small reception afterward in the vestry. Dannie was not there, which surprised me. We all loved these parties—whiskey and herring for the men, wine and sweet things for the women and children. But nothing was said, and we strolled home quietly. Mother always looked different in her *shabbes* clothes. Father walked beside her like a prince—calm and dignified, neatly dressed, unruffled, majestic in his precisely trimmed beard.

My two older sisters stood at the door of our house, waiting, with an expression of anguish.

"It's Dannie," the older one said.

A cloud of anger came over my father's face. "What is it?" he said roughly. Mother, suddenly frightened, pushed past Father and rushed into the house. Dannie, the wild one, was her favorite.

Inside the front door, it was clear where to go. The door on the right to the front parlor was open. Inside this room, with its upright piano and upholstered furniture, reserved for special visitors, was a heavy sideboard with a cupboard which Father always kept locked. The lock had been broken open and on top of the sideboard was a letter from Dannie.

A terrible thought swamped my mind. Dannie had written the letter on *shabbes*! He had forced the lock on *shabbes!*

Mother was wringing her hands. Father had picked up the paper and was reading it to her:

> I am going to Edinburgh to enlist in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders as a drummer-boy. I was afraid to tell you. I have had to borrow the railway fare from the cupboard but I will send it back. Don't worry. I'll be all right.

My father stood motionless, holding the paper. I had burst into tears, with my mother. To have broken open the cupboard—and on *shabbes*. It was as if the earth had opened up.

Father stood there, and then, after a long silence, said gently to Mother: "Come, Rachel, the children are hungry." We went into the dining room and sat down, with Dannie's place empty. My father had washed his hands in the ritual way for the meal, and now said grace, as he cut the bread: "Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who bringest forth bread from the earth. . . ."

WITH DINNER over, I went off on my own, down to the beach to see if Sammy Woolf or Willie Fisher or anyone I knew might be there. I was particularly hoping that Sammy hadn't gone to the pictures. He had told me that morning in synagogue that Dolly had come home very late after seeing the Rothschild at our house, and had got into trouble. Her mother had called her some name which neither of us understood. We wanted to look it up, if we only knew where. But now it seemed unimportant. I wanted to tell him about Dannie—not about the cupboard, but that he had gone off to enlist, and in a Highland Regiment, with a kilt. But Sammy wasn't there. It felt lonely. People were sitting on the hot sand, soldiers and sailors among them, with uniforms unbuttoned in the heat. Some people were swimming. But no one could swim as far out as Dannie. Thinking of him, I turned back from the beach.

It was too early for the afternoon service, and as I came near our house, I went on past it toward

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the market place, to wander among the stalls. It was always cheerful there on a Saturday afternoon, and my troubles soon faded. I had just settled down to watch a Punch and Judy show when I saw Mrs. Fisher, Willie's mother, in front of me, heavily laden with shopping bags. She had stopped for a minute to rest and mop her brow, and gave me a smile as she recognized me. In turning to smile, she dropped two of the bags, which burst, scattering fruit in all directions. I bent down instinctively to help her, and we laughed at the problem she now faced, her arms full of broken bags. "Let me help you," I said to her. "Oh, thank you," she said, putting the broken bags into my arms. I held out my arms for more. "I can take the bread, too," I said proudly. "You're a good boy," she said, handing it to me. "I'm really exhausted. I'd never have got home without help."

We struggled along together, up the hill away from the market. My arms began to ache, but I was very happy to help her. When we got to her shop, she took her parcels from me and gave me an apple for myself. I took it and strolled away cheerfully, thinking that I was now a little late for *minhah*—the afternoon service; and at that moment, as I thought of *minhah,* the enormity of what I had been doing swept over me. Without realizing it, I had broken the Sabbath! I had carried things in the street, which was absolutely forbidden. I was as bad as Dannie. A horrible sinking fear came into my heart. I looked at the apple in my hand and threw it away fiercely.

All through the service, and at home later, I went over it all to myself. Something bad was happening to us—to all our family. Dannie had gone, my hero. Simon would go too, with his quiet, clever ways. Were we all sinful, rebelling against Father, like the children of Israel? I muttered my night prayer fervently as I fell asleep.

BUT in sleep, the fear returned. I was tossing, struggling to get free of something holding me back, when I awoke to find myself being carried into the cellar of our house, held in a blanket in my father's arms, like Isaac being taken by his father Abraham to the sacrifice. I knew as I opened my eyes that a great bang had awakened me, and then I heard another—a gun, a whole range of guns—booming away overhead.

"Shush," my father said, "don't be afraid."

I struggled out of the blanket and looked around in the dim light. They were all there, Mother and the baby, and the girls, all in night clothes, shivering in blankets.

I knew, even before my father spoke, that the worst had happened. "It's a Zeppelin," he said. "Sleep now. Don't worry; it will be all right."

"No!" I cried, "No! No!" I managed to break away and run up the stairs. It was all my fault. I had sinned. I couldn't stay hiding in the cellar, waiting to be crushed.

"Come back," my mother cried. "The Zeppelin!"

Father was running after me, but I had got upstairs and run to the window in the large room which looked out toward the sea. The curtains were open, and I stood there breathless at what the heavens showed. The sky was criss-crossed in a dazzling pattern of searchlights, switching swiftly up and down and across. And suddenly, caught in a criss-cross of light, we saw it—the great silver shape sailing straight at us.

THE guns barked out in a cannonade. The earth shook, but the Zeppelin came on, unharmed, untouched.

The searchlights had lost her. They flickered around, the guns were silent.

And now, first quietly, and then more loudly, we heard the motors. We could *hear* the Zeppelin. It was over our heads.

The guns spoke again, and the searchlights roamed the sky; but there was nothing to see now in the flickering light, only the sound of the engines coming near in a roar. The guns boomed again. At any moment now, the bombs. . . .

In the sky above our heads, we saw a red flash, and then in the same second a sudden burst of flame. It grew as we watched into a roaring mass of flame—the whole sky was on fire. The Zeppelin!

I felt a wild exultation. My father ran down into the cellar to fetch the others, and I dashed to the front door. As I opened it, the noise grew suddenly louder—the crackle of flames and the cries of the people in the street.

"It's going down on the Town Hall!"

"No, on the cliffs!"

It was, in fact, tearing its way into some fields near the beach, where the gypsy caravans often stood. The trees around had begun to burn, and the whole sky before us was lit up in flame. The family had all come upstairs from the cellar to see. They were laughing and shouting outside with everybody else. My father stood immobile, slightly apart, his head lifted, his beard glistening in the fiery light.

People were rushing through the streets toward the Zeppelin. I ran upstairs for my trousers, and dashed out too. The Zeppelin was down: there was nothing more to be afraid of. All kinds of thoughts burst into my head, to pop like balloons. I was moving into a higher class at school and would lose Miss Freeman. I might have to find a new friend, with Willie Fisher left behind. It didn't matter. The Kaiser was finished. Dannie would come back, in his kilt. Father would be smiling. We would all be together again.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Paul Goodman in Retrospect

Joseph Epstein

"A voice a good deal undervalued is that of Paul Goodman," wrote a reviewer in *Book Week*, roughly a decade ago—or precisely at the time when, far from being undervalued, Paul Goodman's career was very much in the ascendant. Ten years ago Goodman was easily this country's best-known radical thinker, a spokesman for all who wanted change in the United States, a prolific writer and lecturer, a man more than any other admired by the young. "Goodman is, quite simply, indefatigable," our reviewer in *Book Week* continued. "How characterize him? The Pied Piper of the American Welfare State? Our St. Paul of the Inspiring Radicalism? The Intellectuals' Martin Luther King, Jr.? In some loose sense Paul Goodman is all these things and more. He is an extraordinary man—decent, patient, incredibly learned—who has some extraordinary things to say about the way we in America live." Was our bubbling reviewer perhaps being ironical, or was he altogether sincere in his enthusiasm? He was quite sincere, allow me to assure you, for I am in a privileged position to know, since I wrote the review.

I was about to complete that last sentence by writing, "since, to my chagrin, I wrote the review." But I am less chagrined than amazed at what a decade will do to a body of writing such as Paul Goodman's and to one's own opinion of it. That review, of a book entitled *Like A Conquered Province: The Moral Ambiguity of America*, about which I can remember almost nothing, ends by announcing that Goodman is "a man whose life restores honor to the word 'citizen.'" I believe that the book's paperback edition carries that line as a blurb, along with blurbs from a few other enthusiasts. If truth-in-advertising laws were enforced in the publishing business, I should be, if not in jail, then under heavy fine, for the fact is I no longer believe anything of the kind about Paul Goodman.

How, then, account for all that gushing enthusiasm? I suppose there would be no public need to account for it at all, but that the possibility of a resurgence of interest in the work of Paul Goodman, who died in 1972, may be under way. Three collections of his essays and occasional writings—*Drawing the Line, Nature Heals,* and *Creator Spirit, Come!**—have recently been published, edited by Professor Taylor Stoehr, who is also at work on a biography of Goodman. Yet a second Goodman biography is said to be in the works, this one by Raymond Rosenthal, the critic and translator from the Italian. Is it possible, then, that Paul Goodman's career might be gaining not its second but indeed its third wind?

One speaks of Goodman's career gaining not its second but indeed its third wind because the period of his greatest prominence, the 1960's, marked something of a comeback for Paul Goodman. After what looked to be a promising beginning as a literary man (critic and novelist, poet and playwright) and social theorist (psychologist and city planner, philosopher and anarchist), Goodman's career suffered its first serious reversal when, during World War II, the principal editors of *Partisan Review*, to which Goodman had contributed frequently, could not accommodate his conscientious objection—indeed active opposition—to the war. According to Professor Stoehr, Goodman "regarded the loss of *Partisan*'s backing as fatal to his literary career," and came to believe that the magazine's editors, Philip Rahv and William Phillips, froze him out of other places of literary prestige and power.

If Paul Goodman's politics were troublesome, his sexual activities were scarcely less so. Technically, Goodman was a bisexual—he was married and the father of two children—but as with most men who call themselves bisexual, much of his energy seemed to be engaged in the pursuit of younger male lovers. Such at all events was the aggressiveness of Goodman's homosexuality that it caused him to be fired from jobs even at such morally flexible institutions as the University of Chicago during the early years of Robert Hutchins; the Manumitt School, an offshoot of A. J. Muste's Brookwood Labor College; and Black Mountain College. When Goodman was a strong Reichian, which in some respects he always remained, Wilhelm Reich himself claimed that Goodman was giving "Orgonomy" a bad name. Reading about Goodman's homosexual escapades, or hearing anecdotes from people who knew him, one is reminded of no one quite so much as the minor character in Clancy Sigal's last novel who was "expelled from Summerhill for behavior offensive to A. S. Neill."

Politically difficult, sexually impossible, Paul Goodman nevertheless plowed on. He collaborated with Fritz Perls on the book *Gestalt Therapy*, saw patients as a lay analyst, wrote his ambitious if not very readable novel, *The Empire City*. But generally, as he recorded in *Five Years*, the journal he kept from 1955 through 1960, Goodman felt frustrated, purposeless, out-of-it. *Five Years* carries the subtitle, "Thoughts During a Useless Time." In one of his journal entries, remarking that he did not leave *Par-*

Joseph Epstein *is the editor of the* American Scholar.

* Free Life Editions, *Drawing the Line*, 272 pp., $11.95; *Nature Heals*, 259 pp., $11.95; *Creator Spirit, Come!*, 284 pp., $11.95.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tisan Review but that it left him, Goodman notes: "I have never left *anybody* who has access to a printing press!" He had in the meantime written a book, purportedly about juvenile delinquency, entitled *Growing Up Absurd*, for a publisher who rejected the completed manuscript. The story has it that the book went the rounds of sixteen different publishers till it was picked up by Norman Podhoretz, the newly appointed editor of COMMENTARY, who then ran large segments of it in the magazine while also persuading Jason Epstein of Random House to bring it out in hard covers. Published in 1960, *Growing Up Absurd* was to prove a book of considerable importance for the decade ahead; it was also to provide the ass upon which Paul Goodman would ride into the Jerusalem of a popularity greater than any he had hitherto known, or even possibly dreamed of.

RETURNING to our enthusiastic reviewer, I had read Paul Goodman in *Dissent* and other magazines, but it was in the pages of COMMENTARY that I first came upon *Growing Up Absurd*. The year was 1960, I was a year away from having taken a B.A. at the University of Chicago, and was an enlisted man in the U.S. Army stationed in Arkansas. Even now I can recall reading those COMMENTARY pages in a sweat of approbation: yes; yes; yes; exactly; yes; yes; yes; perfect! Most of us take from books and articles that which we need, or want, leaving the rest, often including the author's intentions, behind. While *Growing Up Absurd* was chiefly about the young Spanish and black kids of New York slums and the Beat generation of San Francisco, and how social arrangements worked to exacerbate rather than alleviate their conditions, I read into the book the message that there was no honorable work for the young in America. To be sure, this was one of the book's principal points. But I, who wanted no part of graduate or professional school, and who had been trained into a rather easy contempt for business, took it for the book's reigning point, and applied it to myself. I wished to earn my living writing, but had serious doubts about being able to bring it off. If I were to fail, as I had every reason to believe I would, I could then contend, as I no doubt would have done, that there was no honorable work in America.

Surely not everyone put this rather special construction upon the pages of *Growing Up Absurd*. A less personal reading of the book was certainly possible, one linking it to its time, of which it was very much a part. Consider that time: the late 1950's, toward the end of the second Eisenhower administration. The great sociological tracts of the day were *The Organization Man*, which attacked the corporations and the suburbs; *The Lonely Crowd*, which pointed up the deadly new conformity among the young; *The Affluent Society*, which scolded a rich country for its misarranged priorities. In intellectual circles, most political argument was then about foreign policy, and chiefly about whether anti-Communism had run its course. Domestically, nearly everyone claimed to be Left, at least after a fashion, though what being Left meant, apart from being for civil liberties and civil rights and a more planned economy, was less than clear. Along came Paul Goodman, whose indictment of American life, radical though without the taint of Marxism to it, was pretty near complete yet had nothing vindictive about it. Holding out the possibility of alternative social arrangements, he seemed to rouse the discussion about domestic policy again after long intellectual slumber. He wanted a more humane, a less repressive society—one, as he kept repeating, less wasteful of human resources, built more to human scale. That there was some truly hideous writing in *Growing Up Absurd*, or that there was what seemed perhaps an undue emphasis on sex, could be let pass. This man cared about the young, about America, about mankind. Or so it then clearly seemed.

How seems it now? Not quite the same, it turns out. Fish and visitors, said Franklin, begin to stink after three days; radical writing dependably rots after a decade. Right off there is, as one rereads it today, an odor of datedness about *Growing Up Absurd*: ". . . the problems I want to discuss in this book," Goodman writes in his opening chapter, "belong primarily, in our society, to the boys: how to be useful and make something of oneself. A girl does not *have* to, she is not expected to, 'make something' of herself." Perhaps one cannot blame Goodman for not including the women's movement in his vaticinations. One can blame him, though, for the tremendous jumble of his book. So many statements in it are made *ex cathedra*. (Of modern marriages, for example: "We are all in the toils of jealousy of our own Oedipus complexes, and few of us can tolerate loneliness and the feeling of being abandoned.") Frequently Goodman will clinch an argument with a quotation from the earlier work by that noted authority—Paul Goodman. Arguments often lead nowhere; subjects founder in obscurity, as when, talking about the community culture of the Beats, Goodman writes that they would do well to ponder, as a model, "the Balinese dances." As befits its anarchist author, *Growing Up Absurd* may be one of the few books organized along anarchist lines; that is to say, without any organization at all.

The language of *Growing Up Absurd* was a compound—compost?—of the purest psychobabble overlaid by sociological barbarisms. No one who so regularly cited himself as an artist ever wrote so poorly. "Depersonalized" was a big item in his vocabulary, as was "structure." He could refer to one's "own meant world"; "needs" were inevitably "felt"; and it nearly goes without saying that he was for "growth," "dialogue," and "feelingful sex." True, such phrases were not then the clichés they have since become, but they served the same purposes, then as now, of evasion, obfuscation, and self-deception. But Goodman's book contains clichés of thought as well as of language. "Community" was one he regularly fell back upon, as in this dubious statement in *Growing Up Absurd*: "children of all classes are equally deprived of the human community." ("With us," he notes in his journal, "the Absurd has become so huge that I feel justified in the Arbitrary.") He availed himself of the even more commonplace clichés

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of social criticism, complaining of freeways, suburbs, supermarkets; and at a higher level of generality, though certainly no deeper a level of penetration, of Wall Street and Madison Avenue and Hollywood.

Paul Goodman was famously eclectic, which seemed to give him the authority to speak out in several different voices. At one point, he spoke as a psychologist; at one point, as a literary critic; at one point, as a city planner (co-author, with Percival Goodman, of *Communitas*); and always as an artist ("Consider the case of the artist," he writes, "my own."). While the variety of Paul Goodman's accomplishments seemed to make him more appealing in his role as a social critic, the harsh fact is that he was not a very incisive psychologist, an original city planner, an interesting literary critic, or a good novelist, poet, or playwright. That he did all these things is impressive, but as Samuel Johnson once said, "A horse that can count up to ten is a remarkable horse, not a remarkable mathematician."

Although many of the notions in *Growing Up Absurd* anticipated those of the New Left later in the 1960's, as Goodman's vaporous language anticipated the therapeutic view of life still much in the air today, there remains a sense in which Paul Goodman was not himself conventionally doctrinaire. "I have felt the power of my disinterestedness," he wrote, "since indeed I have no ax to grind and don't want anybody's money." To come on as he did well above the ruck, all disinterest and deep feeling, was surely a great part of the appeal of Paul Goodman. After talking with a group of young men outside Hamilton, Ontario, for whom the future, because bereft of useful work, seems hopeless, Goodman, in *Growing Up Absurd*, writes: "I turned away from the conversation abruptly because of the uncontrollable burning tears in my eyes and constriction in my chest." He was very good, in the same vein, at conveying the sense of squandered energies and their cost. Goodman had his voice, his characteristic tone, and when served up in an unadorned syntax, shorn of clotted language, it could be very winning. At the close of a *New Republic* piece on television, for example, after delivering the standard jeremiad against television, Goodman plaintively wrote: "This is too beautiful a medium to be thrown away like this."

Allied to Goodman's sadness at the prospect of waste was the Rousseauism that was one of the major motifs in everything he wrote. Almost everywhere in Paul Goodman's work not men but institutions are at fault. In literary matters, to cite an almost comical example, Goodman felt that the problem with our novelists is not that they are inferior in understanding society but that society is not good enough for them: "The burden of proof is not on the artist but on society." Who is to blame is always left rather vague in Goodman. "Writing *Growing Up [Absurd]*," he notes in his journal, "I rapidly sketched out an enemy, the Organization." Sometimes he called this enemy the System, or the Organized System; sometimes the Establishment. "Of course," he wrote, "I sometimes generalize outrageously for rhetorical effect; I assume the reader is not a moron and does not think that I am."

PROFESSOR STOEHR, in his introduction to *Creator Spirit, Come!*, Goodman's literary essays, remarks that "it would not be far afield to read through his entire work of the 1960's as a kind of literary criticism applied to social problems." Such a case can perhaps be made, but it leaves out a decisive aspect of Paul Goodman's work—his hope, through that work, to dismantle, as Professor Stoehr puts it, "a hardened status quo." Goodman's method was to criticize existing arrangements, always making sure to suggest alternatives: decentralize here, organize from the bottom up rather than the top down there, change an existing law elsewhere. Some of his alternatives were interesting, some superficial, some silly. But were these alternatives made in the name of a large vision? Socialism, strictly speaking, was not the name of Paul Goodman's desire. What, then, was?

In his brief foreword to *Five Years*, Goodman writes: "When I speak of 'psychology' I am speaking about 'society.' " The two, for him, were interchangeable. When Goodman spoke of "repression," he did not mean the word metaphorically, a borrowing from psychological discourse to be put to political or social uses. He thought that people were quite literally repressed, their natures twisted and thwarted by life in modern society. The roots of this repression were psychological, even if its consequences were political. D. H. Lawrence and Wilhelm Reich were his intellectual mentors. "Consult Your Deepest Impulse" was his working principle for his own behavior. Goodman's own Deepest Impulse impelled him to extol freedom and despise constraint. He once told Professor Stoehr that, so hot did its ideas make him, he used to masturbate with Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* open in front of him. Evidently no one ever suggested he take *Civilization and Its Discontents* with him into a cold shower.

The sexual element in Paul Goodman's work was more than merely pronounced. He never hid it. His admirers—myself of a decade ago among them—simply never wished to recognize it. The fact that Paul Goodman was a roughhouse homosexual — "trade's trade," as he once described himself —was not in any case considered a fit topic for polite intellectual talk. Professor Stoehr claims that "More than any other single person, he [Goodman] helped make present-day honesty and the gay liberation movement possible." Yet Goodman's homosexuality was of a very different order from what one thinks of as characteristic of the gay liberation movement today. His was not homosexuality as a matter (as they say nowadays) of "lifestyle," but rather as a pressing need. As Goodman himself envisioned it, there was something "manly," or at least "comradely," about his homosexuality. It was connected, if vaguely, with work, and with athletics. In his journals, he recorded his debt to homosexuality in relieving him of the burden of snobbery: "I think my homosexual needs, involving rough company, catch-as-catch-can chances, and dirty practices, got me out of a lot of snobbery, though homosexuality does not seem to have this effect on the tribe of uptown queens

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whose reaction against their drives makes them more squeamish and snobbish still."

When, in 1966, *Five Years* was published, its pages rife with Goodman's cruisings, his bathhouse and lavatory adventures—"my abject sexuality, quite beyond humiliation" —Goodman was praised for his candor. But he had always been candid in this regard. It was his readers who hid in the closet. *Growing Up Absurd* is filled with sexual references: "The fellows are interrupted in growing up as men; their homosexuality threatens them as immaturity. They are afraid of going backward to boyhood status, admiring the model penises and powers of their seniors and adults." And so on. But somehow such stuff retreated to the background, lost in the attacks on President Eisenhower or the dreariness of life in corporations.

Goodman felt that his homosexuality gave him a certain edge as a writer. "As one grows older," he wrote in an essay entitled "The Politics of Being Queer," "homosexual wishes keep one alert to adolescents and young people more than heterosexual wishes do. . . ." He was also, to put it gently, sexually highly charged: "There have been few days back to my 11th year when I have not had an orgasm one way or another." Among his admirers, there was a tendency to treat Paul Goodman's homosexuality as peripheral, perhaps as imbuing him with a greater hunger for social justice, but otherwise not really central to his chief concerns. He was, in this view, a cogent critic of modern American life who *happened* to be homosexual.

"Do NOT practice what you preach," Paul Goodman wrote, "preach what you practice." Goodman practiced homosexuality, and as intensely as any man. "I have cruised rich, poor, middle class, and petit bourgeois; black, white, yellow, and brown; scholars, jocks, Gentlemanly C's, and dropouts; farmers, seamen, railroad men, heavy industry, light manufacturing, communications, business, and finance; civilians, soldiers and sailors, and once or twice cops. (But probably for Oedipal reasons, I tend to be sexually anti-Semitic, which is a drag.)" Having practiced homosexuality, did Goodman preach it? Not explicitly, though he was an ambassador for sexuality generally. "Needless to say," he wrote, "if we had better community, we'd have better sexuality too." What is not needless to say, and what is implied in so much of Goodman's writing, is that if we had better sexuality, we would have better community. Thus his young men in *Growing Up Absurd* are often violent as a result of repressed homosexuality. Everywhere the enemy is repressed sexuality. "Most sexual behavior would give more satisfaction and do lasting good, and would certainly result in far less damage, if any, if it were completely ignored by the police and not subject to any social disapproval *qua* sexual." Again, on the subject of education, Goodman believed that what he termed "a functional sexuality" is probably incompatible with our mass school systems, and concluded: "This is one among many reasons why they should be dismantled." For Goodman, the "coercive society" was one that not alone repressed sexuality but also failed to encourage it. The good society, for Goodman, started at the groin.

Many of the things Paul Goodman asked for in his essays and books of the 1960's have now come about, and with rather pitiful consequences; and this as much as anything, when one rereads him today, diminishes his stature. In *Growing Up Absurd,* he complained, for example, that "the powerful interests have the big presses." He should be alive today to read the New York *Times* and the Washington *Post.* In "Pornography, Art, and Censorship," an essay first published in COMMENTARY in 1961, he complained about "the forbidden topic, the mockery of sacred public figures." He should be alive today to read the novels of E. L. Doctorow and Robert Coover, the journalism of Garry Wills and Gore Vidal. He believed that if the legal restrictions were lifted from pornography, it would "ennoble all our art," "humanize sexuality," have "beautiful cultural advantages." He should be alive today to walk the 42nd Street of every large American city. He believed in decentralizing everywhere, getting back to the land and artisanship. He should be alive today to see the squalor of youthful communalism, the triviality of boutique culture. One could go on. Many of the things Paul Goodman asked for have come about—and with the result that he now seems a voice a good deal overvalued in his own lifetime.

France's "New Philosophers"

Roger Kaplan

MUCH has been written in the press on both sides of the Atlantic in the past twelve months about a group of young French writers who have turned against the Marxist inheritance which for the past twenty or thirty years has been the birthright of French intellectuals. Although the group is fairly large, the two names mentioned most prominently are those of André Glucksmann and Bernard-Henri Lévy, and a good deal of the furor has concerned three of their

ROGER KAPLAN, *a new contributor, writes about French politics and culture for the* American Spectator.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

books, none of which has yet appeared in English: *Barbarism with a Human Face* by Lévy and *The Cook and the Man-Eater* and *The Master Thinkers* by Glucksmann.

The information that has circulated about these men and their ideas has been for the most part repetitive and shallow, even in France, where much of the commentary has been by journalists who have not read their subjects' books very carefully, if at all. To some extent, the *nouveaux philosophes* (as the journalists dubbed them with some malicious irony, until they took up the sobriquet themselves) have encouraged this. On the one hand, their books are difficult and sometimes tiresome, but on the other hand they have spent a great amount of time on television and in interviews, popularizing their ideas. But there is more than a media blitz behind the phenomenon—intellectuals do not become best-sellers every day—and what is involved is more than this year's fashion. The "new philosophers" are worth taking a look at, both for what they say about French culture now and for what they have to say to us.

I

As WITH most things French, the young philosophers who have been treated like movie stars in the past months are political animals. Most of them participated in France's last historical melodrama, the student and workers' revolt of May 1968, and served in the ranks of the "Marxist-Leninist" student organizations which were then proclaiming Mao Tse-tung as the great helmsman of humanity and which were actively supporting the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese. Many of them were students of Louis Althusser, the Communist theoretician at the Ecole Normale, France's most prestigious school. Indeed, almost all of them are *normaliens* (graduates of the Ecole Normale), and thus officially certified as their country's best thinkers.

In July 1968, as a matter of fact, André Glucksmann, whose parents were refugees from Nazi Germany, published a short Maoist book, *Stratégie de la Révolution: Introduction*. Studded with quotations from Marx and Lenin, this tract purported to show that the May events were the decisive crack in a crumbling bourgeois façade, and that once the political situation became clearer, the working class and its allies would take over France. Glucksmann, who had been a member of the Moscow-oriented Communist party, reserved some of his fiercest scorn for the meliorative and anti-revolutionary role played by the Communists in the May events, and suggested that de Gaulle had made a deal with the party (with Soviet approval) in order to save the French state. According to Glucksmann in 1968, the Communist party, by blocking the road to revolution, was as great an enemy of "socialism" as was the bourgeoisie.

The obvious failures of the May revolt—it was followed by the biggest Gaullist landslide in French history—coupled with the degeneration into fanaticism of the Maoist movement, paved the way for some reassessments, the first of which appeared in 1970. In *Marx est mort*, Jean-Marie Benoist (born in 1942) argued that French thought had become stultified by Marxism. It was a valid point, though Raymond Aron (who virtually alone had had the courage to criticize the May 1968 events) had made the same point more than fifteen years earlier in *The Opium of the Intellectuals*. Following this, Jean-Paul Dollé (born in 1939) argued in *Le Désir de Révolution* (1972) that revolution was a perfectly good impulse, but that the Marxists had castrated Marx and some fundamental rethinking was therefore in order.

Of this, André Glucksmann himself was well aware. But what was moving him most in those years was not his friends' efforts to salvage Marx from the Marxists or revolution from the revolutionaries but his reading of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. The impact of the great Soviet dissident upon Glucksmann was such that his next book, *La cuisinière et le mangeur-d' hommes* (*The Cook and the Man-Eater*), written in 1974 and published the following year, can be read as a commentary on *The Gulag Archipelago*. Subtitled an "essay on the relations between the state, Marxism, and the concentration camps," *The Cook* is a painstakingly detailed survey of the disastrous economic and political history of the USSR, as seen against the high-minded declarations of its leaders in their effort to mask by theory the monstrosity which they had created.

Among intellectuals long in the habit of ignoring or excusing the facts of Soviet history, the impact of Glucksmann's book was electrifying To be sure, Raymond Aron and Boris Souvarine had said much the same things about the Soviet Union, as had Jean-François Revel,* but Glucksmann's was a voice from the radical Left itself, from inside the family. A great burden of hypocrisy was lifted, and others began to speak out too. In 1976, Christian Jambet (born in 1949) and Guy Lardreau (born in 1947), ex-Maoists both, published an attack on totalitarian organizations. Then, in early 1977, when the Socialist-Communist alliance was making clear gains in the French polls, the "new philosophers" exploded their biggest bombs. Bernard-Henri Lévy (born in 1949), an editor at Grasset who had published several of the controversial works, came out with *La Barbarie à visage humain* (*Barbarism with a Human Face*), and the same firm published the work which is by far the most thoroughgoing to date, André Glucksmann's *Les Maîtres Penseurs* (*The Master Thinkers*).

II

THE "new philosophers" have a certain number of biographical connections, but with the exception of their political enemies they have little in common and certainly do not constitute a school. What is most important about them is that they wish to recover the skepticism—or, as one might say, the freedom—of philosophy, and for this reason the best approach to them is through their books.

* See the reviews of Revel's *The Totalitarian Temptation* by Stephen Haseler (in the August 1977 COMMENTARY) and by the present writer (in the *American Spectator*, November 1977).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Cook and the Man-Eater, to begin with, is an impassioned work, which one puts down with difficulty and which leaves a chill in the spine. It is comprised of three strands: an analysis of Soviet totalitarianism; a commentary on Russian dissidence; and a review of the reasons for French blindness to the obvious. Glucksmann recounts how, in the 1950's, the French fellow-travelers, Jean-Paul Sartre foremost among them, went to great lengths to "save" the USSR for the Left, and could not bring themselves to condemn publicly the Soviet camps, let alone to compare them with the Nazi ones. Glucksmann's somber comment is that Marxism is responsible for this, for the masterwork of Marxism is the

> edification and the consolidation of the Soviet Union and the Gulag Archipelago. The secret is in the *and*. . . . Binding the two is a Marxist discourse. To question Russia is to question ourselves, it is to question the Russia in ourselves.

The Russian Marxists defended the "workers' state," however pathetically, during the Purges, and the French Marxists defended it too. To Glucksmann, the whole point of bringing Marxist theory into Russia was to facilitate the building of a vast prison, and the whole point of Western Marxism was to defend that prison, to present it as a "progressive" alternative to liberal democracy. Only the non-Marxist dissidents, Glucksmann argues, could speak truly about the system in which they lived. His constant references to Solzhenitsyn, to Nadezhda Mandelstam, to Andrei Amalrik serve the purpose not only of getting to the facts (for which he also relies heavily on the historian Robert Conquest), but of showing how the veil of official lies can be, and has been, rent.

The Cook and the Man-Eater calls into question the political assumptions that have dominated much of the French intellectual elite for almost three decades. The next job for Glucksmann and Lévy was to question the entire intellectual background of the 20th-century Left; this they accomplish in *Barbarism with a Human Face* and *The Master Thinkers.*

Lévy's *Barbarism with a Human Face* is probably the most accessible of the "new-philosophical" works, partly because the precious and inbred style which all the "new philosophers" share is kept within reasonable bounds by his cold and lucid elegance. In this book, Lévy goes back to what is for him, as indeed it is for so many intellectuals, the beginning: the optimism of the 18th-century Enlightenment. He finds there a solitary and misunderstood Rousseau, alone against his times ("*Emile* says only this: the idea of a good *society* is an absurd dream"). From here, Lévy takes on every leftist dogma and finds it false, in particular the notions that history is progressive and that the state (when in the right hands) can be an agent of progress. Socialism, the central leftist myth, with its philosophical premises, with its cultural connotations, with its eschatological project, is nothing but an "encyclopedia of lies." As optimism is the surest opiate which despotism can invent, socialism, perennially optimistic, over and against all its failures, is the best trap despotism can devise.

Indeed, the notion of progress is really a deeply reactionary idea, says Lévy, because it always leads to a strengthening of the state. Nor is there such a thing as a "proletarian" state; the whole concept of the proletariat as an elected class is the most stupendous myth of our times:

> The proletariat in power becomes very quickly and necessarily the sinister hoax of tanks in Budapest and Prague, new oppression for the benefit of a new prince born on the pyre of disappointed popular hopes.

Lévy believes it is high time for intellectuals to proclaim themselves *anti*-progressive, opposing the state's invariable tendency toward absolute power. They must give up the search for the good society and return to the older quest for the good life, becoming "moralistic, in the classic sense of Kant, Camus, or Merleau-Ponty."

Although Lévy's book assails the mentality of the French Left as mendacious and tendentious, its attack is more sweeping than deep. Brilliantly suggestive, it is novel somewhat in the manner of Albert Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus,* saying out loud what was rapidly becoming a widespread rumor. With Glucksmann's major work to date, *The Master Thinkers,* however, the French intellectual climate is changed perhaps irrevocably. For with this book it is not merely the traditions of the Left which are attacked, it is not only jaded fashions that are repudiated; philosophy itself seems to acquire a fresh significance.

The Master Thinkers examines the role of 19th-century German philosophy in the forging of the German state. While there is nothing particularly original in such an enterprise, Glucksmann has a way of putting the emphasis in unexpected places, and he also has a way of using his own experience to illuminate a general phenomenon. Thus, Glucksmann comes out of a milieu which has always been extremely intolerant. Sartre's arrogant method of dismissing opponents—by insult—is not at all uncharacteristic of Parisian intellectuals. It seems to have occurred to Glucksmann (who also does not suffer fools gladly) that this habit, while there is much that is purely Gallic in it, bears an unpleasant resemblance to totalitarian political behavior, behavior which in turn strikes him as having a connection with a certain stream of political *thought.* Fichte, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche, in his rereading, are shown to have taught the world, in particular the Germans and the Russians and the Chinese, that thinking—that is, correct thinking—gives one the key—indeed, the right—to dominate others.

In Glucksmann's analysis, the "master thinkers"—even Marx with his emancipation-of-the-working class-by-itself, even Nietzsche with his fulminations against the Wilhelminian state—turn out to be the mentors of the 20th-century's worst tyrants. Every master thinker claimed superiority over his predecessors, and in this claim revealed a contempt not only for the skeptical, reflective task of philosophy, but for all those who might stand

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

EGYPT'S LIBERAL EXPERIMENT, 1922-1936

Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid-Marsot

The history of modern Egypt has frequently been written with a total disregard of earlier periods. This tendency on the part of historians, and the fact that no native Egyptian ruled over Egypt from the time of the Pharoahs until 1952, led Western observers to conclude that Egyptians were servile, unused to self-government, and incapable of appreciating it. The present work, an Egyptian's analysis of her society and its past history, rights the balance.

288 pages, 6 line drawings, 3 tables, $14.00

At bookstores

CALIFORNIA

University of California Press

Berkeley 94720

German identification in the age of modernism

Ranging "widely over the Wilhelmenian and Weimar decades ... these six erudite essays enlarge our understanding of modernism and of the special role of German Jews in furthering the modernist spirit."—*Publishers Weekly.* $12.95

Freud, Jews and Other Germans

MASTERS AND VICTIMS IN MODERNIST CULTURE

Peter Gay

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

200 Madison Ave. New York, N.Y. 10016

to "benefit" from the world-shaking changes which despots armed with the right system of thought would bring about. To make matters worse, to the connection between state-building theories and intolerance for the ideas of others, Glucksmann finds that he must add racism. In most of the leading German philosophies of the 19th century can be found the germ of anti-Semitism, certainly in their concepts of the German *nation,* and the contempt of Marx and Engels for the small peoples of Europe—Basques, Serbs, Polish Jews ("the filthiest race of all," as Engels put it)—is notorious.

The revolution never served the people, it always enslaved them. It is this thought that torments Glucksmann—this, and the kindred thought that he himself took part, in his small way, in one of the great repressive movements of the 20th century. It is not the philosopher's task to seek power. Yet the philosophical tradition out of which he comes sought nothing else.

If *The Master Thinkers* is the "spiritual exercise" of one exceptional man, it is also the confession of a generation. The desire to dominate through thought which Glucksmann discovers in German philosophy was the desire of the generation of 1968. The violence which he finds seething under the dense *discours du maître*—a violence neither Marx nor Nietzsche bothered to conceal—was adopted by that generation in its Maoist fury, in its rationalizations for murder and mayhem, in its hymns to the "final conflict." The bitterness with which Glucksmann writes of the "plebs," over whose bodies and in whose names all this violence is supposed to take place, shows that he is a man who has looked lengthily into the mirror of his mind and not liked what he has seen there.

III

THE French have always had a talent for what they themselves call *la vulgarisation,* the popularization of ideas. Marxism is a case in point. The French have been speaking Marxese for years without bothering to study it in the original. Today's long overdue study, led by Glucksmann, Lévy, and the other "new philosophers," has resulted in some rude reappraisals.

Belatedly but with a vengeance, French intellectuals are discovering the values of a liberal political order. Despite Lévy's contempt for capitalism and Glucksmann's rather careless comparisons of the U.S. and the USSR, there is no doubt they are prepared to assert which is the lesser evil. There is no doubt, too, that they will continue to condemn the Soviet Union for its foreign policy and for its internal organization. They are adamantly opposed to all Communist parties, and see no improvements in the Eurocommunists.

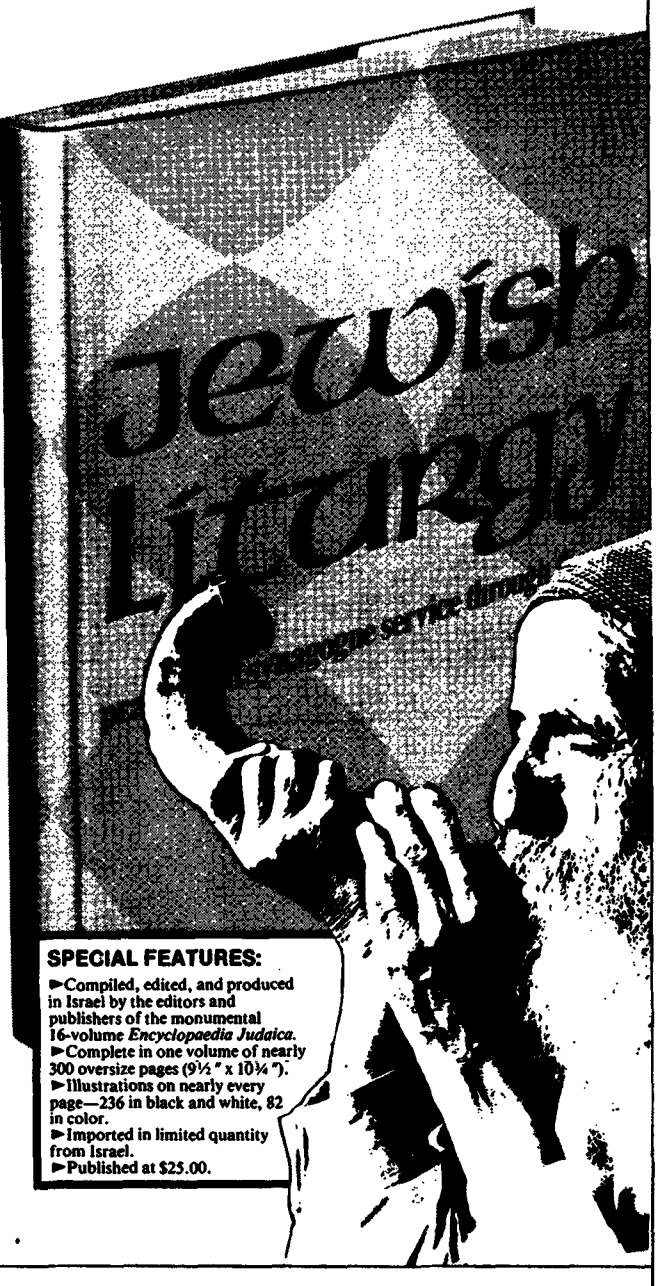
In their public statements, Lévy and Glucksmann and most of the others still identify themselves as leftists. They hope to drive the French Communists out of the respectability they have been working assiduously to achieve, but it is not certain what they wish to do with the Socialists under François Mitterrand. Lévy (as has been seen) has no faith in the conventional notions of socialist-led progress, and Glucksmann remains distrustful of all organizations. In the forthcoming elections in France, it is not altogether impossible that some of them will announce for Giscard d'Estaing.

But the critiques of the "new philosophers" are bound to have a more lasting impact than their political choices this year. It would be fitting indeed if the *nouveaux philosophes,* who ten years ago contributed to driving de Gaulle from office, helped now to demolish the classic Left, with its ideology and its slogans irrelevant to today's France, just as the anti-democratic Right was destroyed by de Gaulle. For if one thing is certain about France, it is that its political formations make little sense when compared with the wishes of the electorate. The "new philosophers" may contribute to an intelligent realignment of French politics, if such a thing is possible. They have, at any rate, started a debate which will go a long way toward clearing the French air of the vulgar leftism in which its intellectuals have been choking.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Jewish Book Club Invites You to Celebrate Being Jewish

Everything you've ever wanted to know about the ceremonies, rituals, prayers, and observances of the Jewish people as handed down from generation to generation through four millennia and across five continents—now complete in one monumental volume.



YOURS FREE!

WITH MEMBERSHIP IN THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB
PUBLISHER'S LIST PRICE—$25.00

The entire ritual legacy of Judaism is at your fingertips in this sumptuous book. You'll find detailed instructions on how each act of worship is performed in the synagogue as well as in the home. And you'll discover the full historical background to what Jews do and why they do it. Everything you want your children to know is here:

- The prayers (all of them)...how the totality of the Jewish experience is distilled in their words and music...and how the Jewish people have woven them into a four-thousand-year-old conversation with God.
- The entire order of service in the synagogue and how to explain everything to your children.
- Encyclopedic descriptions of each of the 38 holidays, festivals, fasts, and feasts of the Jewish year...and of every important event of a Jewish lifetime.
- More than twenty different modes of Jewish worship...including the rites of Sephardim, Ashkenazim, and other distinctive Jewish communities in all their variety.
- The art (and architecture) of prayer, with illustrations from the world's great synagogues and collections of Judaica.

This extraordinary work is yours to explore and enjoy—*free*, with membership in the Jewish Book Club. Now in its twelfth year, the Jewish Book Club (a service of the American Jewish Committee) has provided tremendous savings on hundreds of important and bestselling books of Jewish interest. Its many thousands of individual members, as well as synagogues and Jewish community centers across the nation, have been able, through the Club, to enjoy savings on such favorite titles as Abba Eban's *My People;* the *Siddur*, published under the auspices of the Rabbinical Council of America; Irving Howe's *World of Our Fathers; To Jerusalem and Back* by Nobel Prize winner Saul Bellow; plus many, many more—fiction and non-fiction, history, biography, art and archaeology, religion, guides to Jewish living, cookbooks, travel books, deluxe gift editions, children's books—even limited-edition etchings. In short, the Club is a complete buying service for the Jewish reader of today!

SPECIAL FEATURES:

- ►Compiled, edited, and produced in Israel by the editors and publishers of the monumental 16-volume *Encyclopaedia Judaica.*
- ►Complete in one volume of nearly 300 oversize pages (9½" x 10¾").
- ►Illustrations on nearly every page—236 in black and white, 82 in color.
- ►Imported in limited quantity from Israel.
- ►Published at $25.00.

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

1. **Savings up to 50%:** On the best of Jewish-interest reference, fiction, history, biography, archaeology, cooking, travel, religion, art, children's books, records, limited-edition etchings, unique deluxe gift editions.
2. **Quality editions:** All books are identical to the publishers' editions in content, format, size, and quality.
3. **Free magazine:** *The Jewish Book News* provides lively reviews of books, art, and recordings of Jewish interest.
4. **A complete cultural service for the Jewish family:** You'll be able to keep abreast of the best and most important books of Jewish interest—many not available to the general public or stocked by local stores.
5. **Your minimum obligation:** Purchase as few as four additional selections the first year.
6. **A convenience and time-saver:** Home shopping & home delivery.

HOW THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB WORKS

After your membership is accepted, you will begin receiving *The Jewish Book News,* a free publication sent to you thirteen times a year (about every four weeks). All selections and alternates will be described in advance in the magazine. If you want the main selection featured in the magazine, do nothing and it will be sent to you automatically. If you want an alternate or no book at all, simply indicate your choice on the order form always enclosed with the *News* and return it to us so that we receive it by the date specified. This date is designed to allow you at least 10 days to decide whether you want the selection.

Membership guarantee: If your News *is delayed in the mail and therefore you receive the main selection without having had 10 days to notify us, you may return that selection at our expense.*

THE JEWISH BOOK CLUB
165 East 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10022

Please send my free copy of *Jewish Liturgy* (regularly $25.00) and enroll me in the Jewish Book Club.

I agree to purchase as few as 4 additional selections or alternates during the next 12 months at the special member's prices plus a small charge for postage and handling. All selections and alternates will be described for me in advance in *The Jewish Book News* and I may decline any of them by returning the printed card provided. (Offer valid only in the United States and Canada.)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

SIGNATURE _____

A Service of the American Jewish Committee

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Tender Comrades

THE ROMANCE OF AMERICAN COMMUNISM. By VIVIAN GORNICK. *Basic Books. 216 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by MARION MAGID

ON STALINISM, at least, one might have thought the verdict was in for all time, but no such luck. The revisionist impulse peeping shyly from every publisher's list grows fatter and bolder with each success, thriving on ignorance, short memories, nostalgia, and that passion for novelty at any cost which is fast becoming a kind of cultural deformity. This past season alone has given us Robert Coover's *The Public Burning* and Jessica Mitford's *A Fine Old Conflict*, and now comes Vivian Gornick's adoring account of a year spent hunting up and interviewing old members of the Communist Party USA.

There are forty-four portraits in all here, offering what is intended to serve as (and probably is) a representative cross-section of CP membership in the party's heyday. Those interviewed range in age from their late forties to their seventies, though most are in their late fifties to early sixties. (Two New Leftists are also included.) These people were in the party for anywhere from ten to thirty years—a substantial portion of their adult lives—and occupied positions ranging from humble picketers and meeting-attenders like Dina Shapiro, the Los Angeles dressmaker who is still waiting for the revolution, and Selma Gardinsky, who thinks it would all have come out differently if the party hadn't backed Henry Wallace in 1948, to branch organizers, section heads, and state party chairmen. Most joined the party during the 30's, and a few still seem to belong, though it is difficult, from behind the veil of the author's dreamy prose, to discern such bald statistics. But one's general impression is that most ceased to be members at around the time the party fell apart—that is, in 1956 after Khrushchev's speech to the 20th Congress of the Communist party detailing the record of Stalinist "achievement."

In keeping with their proportions in the party itself, Jews predominate in Miss Gornick's book, though the author does her best to avoid clumping them together too obviously. A section of Chapter One is specifically devoted to the "Jewish Marxists," but others crop up under such soulful headings as "Those of the Middle Kingdom"; "The Ordinariness of Daily Activity & the Revolution Around the Corner"; "The Wholeness of the CP World"; "Varieties of Aftermath"; and so forth. Out of the forty-four, then, more than half are Jews, and about half of these come from Jewish-leftist backgrounds.

With this group the author is most familiar, having come from it herself (as a mawkish prelude attests), and she evokes all too vividly the quality of their speech, their dress, their mannerisms, their marriages, and such oddities of the period as the Communist-run housing project in the Bronx known as the Coops, where May Day was a school holiday, and the luckless tots in the sandbox were apt to be named for Communist luminaries. (When they got older, if they were good, they could wear the red-and-blue uniform of the Young Pioneers, and still later, if truly promising, they might be singled out for cadre school or "going into industry"—signing on as factory workers with a view to recruiting fellow workers into the party.)

But if the Jews are most familiar, it is the non-Jews who evoke the author's most tremulous response, a variety of that same reverence that Jewish radicals themselves felt for bona-fide specimens of the American working class. The air is heavy in these pages with Dos Passos, Steinbeck, and that special brand of Jefferson School historiography which places the Comintern in a direct line of descent from the Boston Tea Party. Thus, the plucky Blossom Sheed, for twenty-five years a highly-placed party functionary on the West Coast, boasts an ancestry that is "literally the salt of the American earth, the kind of people who had fought cheerfully in the Revolution, bravely in the Civil War, and then . . . formed themselves into Worker and Farmer Alliances and become the American Populists." And in the "pure American blue" eyes of rangy Jim Holbrook, son of tenant-farming Nebraska "Jeffersonian Democrats"—who rejoiced at eighteen to find himself "piped into Joe Stalin"—the author discerns that "native rebel I-want-to-know-why look" which explains to her "why Jim Holbrook was an organizer for the Communist party for twenty years." In the background one hears strains of "Ballad for Americans" and "The Talking Union" mingling with the "Internationale," as Communism is once again touted as "20th-century Americanism."

But the mood music is not limited to these precious native exemplars. What all Miss Gornick's subjects have in common—humble rank-and-filers and forty-year *apparatchiks* alike, Jews, Gentiles, blacks, and whites—is quite simply how *nice* they are: the men with their wonderful shocks of pepper-and-salt hair (only two cases of baldness are recorded here); the women with lithe bodies and good bones and salty humor; the Gentiles, blue-eyed almost to a man, looking variously like Peter Finch, Scott Fitzgerald, Thomas Wolfe, and John Wayne; the Jews strong and kindly or else sad and kindly; the one lone Hispanic, "a golden child with a spring of sweetness flowing deep within him." How, one begins to wonder, with all these shrewd, tender, feisty, and gallant souls in its ranks, did the American Communist party manage to rack up a record for duplicity and servility to Moscow unsurpassed in the rest of the Communist world?

The Romance of American Com-

MARION MAGID *is managing editor of* COMMENTARY.

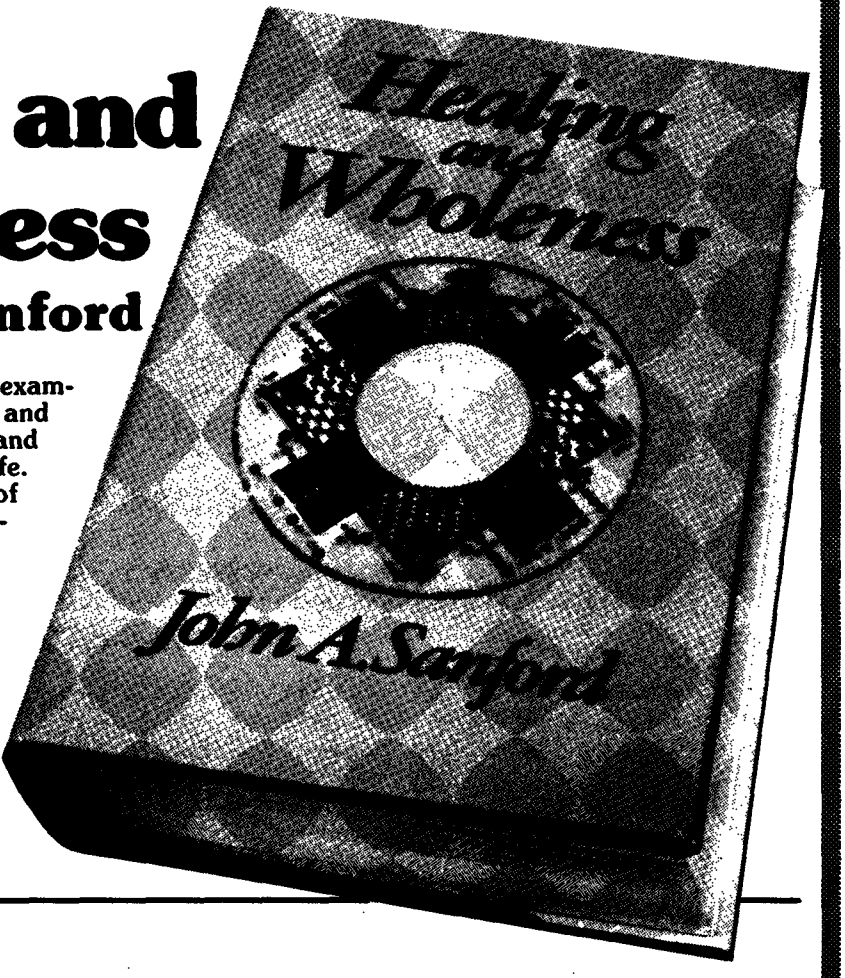
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An important exploration into the meaning of health and the mystery of healing...

Healing and Wholeness

by John A. Sanford

This timely new book engagingly examines the spiritual, psychological and medical implications of health and of its relationship to a whole life. Surveying the present state of healing in our culture, Dr. Sanford is bound to provoke strong reactions from readers on both sides of this much-discussed contemporary issue as he examines the mysteries of healing and the role of the unconscious in achieving and maintaining health. $5.95 paper, $7.95 cloth



Keeping Your Personal Journal

by George F. Simons

This is a helpful "how-to" book for anyone who wants to keep a personal journal or diary for growth, integration and just plain enjoyment. The author tells the what and why of journal keeping, gives practical suggestions about getting started, and suggests how to benefit from rereading and exploring what one has recorded. $4.95 paper, $7.95 cloth

Medicine, Science and Life

by V.S. Yanovsky

Challenging his readers to discover a more realistic, truly modern and unified view of life, an eminent physician and novelist here cites the limitations of much of present medical and scientific practice and goes on to show how the contemporary dilemma is the result of an outdated, mechanistic consciousness. $10.00 cloth

PAULIST PRESS
545 Island Road, Ramsey, New Jersey 07446

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

munism is aptly named; portraying the involvement with Communism as a romantic episode in American history, it sets out to romanticize all those who took part in it. If something polemical is intended here, Miss Gornick has neither the inclination nor, one suspects, the skill to say it outright. Rather, she addresses herself to her own particular specialty, which is extracting the "human reality" from behind the vexed political questions of the age. She asks us to ponder the proposition that the former CP members portrayed in her book—or, as she somewhere calls them, "the golden children called to Marxism"—loved, in effect, not wisely but too well. They "feared, hungered, and cared *more* . . . they were like everybody else, only more so"—more so, that is, in their greater capacity for passion, for engagement, for responding to injustice and to the call of History.

LIKE Miss Gornick's earlier account of a trip to Cairo to extract the "reality" behind the Middle East conflict, the present volume, too, is awash in feeling—so much so that it is almost damp to the touch. Chords are struck, great griefs flow, experiences soak through and wash over, thoughts well up from "somewhere deep inside." At peak moments, these inner changes are accompanied by "gathering stillnesses," converging streams, and other historical sound effects. Yet this prose delirium is, as the Marxists might say, no accident. For under cover of the fog and the rumbling, the book gradually shifts its ground: the author begins by entering the plea that we understand these people; she ends with a ringing reaffirmation of their politics. The great crimes of the Stalin era, and the shabby record of the American Communist party in covering up for them, are transmuted through the mist of her tears into a necessary, if regrettable, stage on the road to "socialism"; her dutiful and for the most part rather complacent party members are transformed into Camusian rebels, participants in a "magnificent sorrow," ". . . torn to pieces so that the many may feed on the wisdom passion alone can purchase."

The casual and not-quite-ingenuous way in which Miss Gornick uses the terms socialism and Communism interchangeably, and then equates either or both of them with "feeling," is epitomized to bathetic effect in her account of the fellow-traveling milieu of her childhood. The time is 1940 or thereabouts, the scene is a "shabby tenement apartment in the Bronx," the author is nestled in the crook of her father's arm as he and his "socialist friends"—men named "Max and Hymie . . . women named Masha and Goldie"—are seated around the kitchen table drinking tea *à la Russe,* eating black bread and herring, and endlessly debating "the issues." Present in spirit if not in the flesh is the author's Russian-born grandmother, the family's first radical, given to exclaiming in what is supposed to be Yiddish, *"Frei! Wir sind hier frei!"* A few pages farther on, like the figures massed in an old WPA mural, is the obligatory idealized panorama of East European Jewish immigrants *circa* 1900—a colorful lot with their "Talmud" (the one-volume paperback edition, presumably), "Spinoza, Herzl, and Marx packed in among the pots and pans and ragged clothes."

This lamplit evocation of Jewish radicalism-in-the-cradle has become such a set piece by now, it would take a heart of stone not to laugh at it. Invariably it features a few touches of Yiddish for authenticity—which it never fails to get wrong—and invariably it features a kind of downward social climbing, turning a Bronx apartment into a "shabby tenement" and a piece of herring into some sort of ethnic communion ritual. But more important than the fraudulent Yiddish and the fraudulent herring is the fraudulent politics. Though this is, as the author would argue, only her own reminiscence, there is no question but that it is also meant as a stand-in for the Jewish immigrant experience as a whole, and as such it cashes in on the current ignorance about the political actualities of that world.

Thus, one would not know from this evocation, cloaked in the twin pieties of socialism and *Yiddishkeit,* that the Jewish Communists (who numbered few within the community as a whole, despite their overrepresentation in the party), far from being either the mainstream or the vanguard of the Jewish working class, were actually cut off from the rest of the community by a kind of *cordon sanitaire*—and not because of their "socialism" (the socialists were their worst enemies), but precisely because of their slavish support of the Soviet Union throughout the long period of Stalinist treachery and the calculated destruction of Soviet Jewish life. There may be some grisly pathos in the tenacity with which the Jewish Communists upheld the "honor" of the Soviet Union through all this, but one looks in vain for traces of the "wisdom passion alone can purchase."

Indeed, not just the socialists are left out of this account, but also the rest of the anti-Communist Jewish Left, including the trade-union movement, the labor Zionists, the Workmen's Circle, and a host of others. When they appear at all, it is as an occasion for the author to display the mendacious politics learned in Marxist kindergarten: "My father was Labor, my uncles were Capital. My father was a socialist, my uncles were Zionists. Therefore Labor was Socialism and Capital was Nationalism." These are of course utterly false oppositions, as even someone prejudiced in the matter might be expected to see; and the travesty of reality they represent is neatly captured in the word "therefore," which attempts to make a sort of dialectical "truth" out of a simple self-serving lie.

ALTHOUGH the Jewish Communists may present an especially pathetic spectacle, they were hardly alone in gullibility, willful self-deception, or moral delinquency. The bloody truth about the Soviet Union (not to speak of the disreputable record of the CPUSA in its own "domestic" operations) was well enough known in the time of which Vivian Gornick is writing, for one must recall that this is not a book about the early 20's and 30's, but extends into the 50's, the 60's, and in some cases into the present. The Moscow Trials, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the Doctors' Plot, the takeover in Czechoslovakia, the Slansky

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Trial, the murdered writers, the labor camps, and all the rest—all of this the American Communists were asked to swallow, and many, to judge from Miss Gornick's sampling, did. Not only swallow—they justified it, those wonderful couples, "hungry for justice," rushing off to protest meetings and "peace" rallies and picket lines while supper cooled on the stove at home and bullets met their mark in the cellars of the Lubianka. To read this book along with, say, the memoirs of Nadezhda Mandelstam is to become almost physically ill. The romance of Communism, indeed. It is an apology that is required—not an elegy.

Eliot's Men

THE RISE OF AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY: CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 1860-1930. By BRUCE KUKLICK. *Yale University Press. 594 pp. $17.95.*

Reviewed by JACK BEATTY

THE subject of this book is the extraordinary philosophic fertility of which Harvard University was the scene and source from the middle of the 19th century through the first two decades of the 20th. If one leaves out John Dewey, and if one blinks the fact that Harvard would not hire Chauncey Wright, Charles Peirce, and Arthur Lovejoy, then it is warrantable hyperbole to say that American philosophy during those years *was* Harvard philosophy—was the thought of William James, Josiah Royce, George Santayana, Ernest Hocking, C. I. Lewis, Alfred North Whitehead, and other lesser lights of the great department. Harvard philosophy was a variegated body of thought, but it had its characteristic note, a note of moral strenuousness, a willingness to tackle the big questions of philosophy, the questions of the meaning of life, of God, of freedom, of immortality—questions in which the wider public had the most vital interest. The Harvard philosophers took upon themselves the task of propounding a "philosophy of life" for a nation eager for science but wary of the social consequences of unbelief. They were thinkers of the deepest civic seriousness.

One says "civic" rather than "political" seriousness in deference to Bruce Kuklick's observation that the Harvard philosophers were not, in the main, social or political thinkers. Strictly speaking, this is true: pragmatism, the leading doctrine of the Harvard thinkers, was a theory of knowledge, not a political theory. Nevertheless, even theories of knowledge have their historical and cultural contexts, and one problem with Mr. Kuklick's erudite account is that he pays too little attention to the world beyond the Harvard Yard; in his pages, American philosophy seems to rise direct from the rarefied air of that famous precinct without so much as a helping waft from the rawer vapors of America. Yet pragmatism fits into its time: it unmistakably echoes the great political and moral shock of the Civil War. The deliberate sanity of its cardinal idea—that we test the truth of our conceptions by their likely effects—marks a decisive renunciation

JACK BEATTY's *reviews and essays have appeared in the* Yale Review, *the* New Republic, *the* Nation, *and the* Saturday Review.

Now Available:

The Roots of Capitalism
By John Chamberlain

A provocative look at the intellectual forces and practical accomplishments that have created American capitalism. "A vastly persuasive case for capitalist theory and practice"—*Barron's*. Hardcover $9.00, Paperback $3.00.

The Wisdom of Adam Smith

Adam Smith may have been the first great economist, but he was no dismal scientist. He was instead a man of great philosophical and historical learning, and his literary style was widely admired. *The Wisdom of Adam Smith* brings together his most incisive and eloquent observations on subjects ranging from political and economic history to morals, philosophy, art, education, war and the American colonies. Compiled by British scriptwriter and playwright John Haggarty, edited and with an introduction by Benjamin A. Rogge. Hardcover $7.95, Paperback $1.95.

Essays On Individuality
Edited by Felix Morley

Twelve distinguished writers and educators examine the place of the individual in contemporary society. The contributors are John Dos Passos, Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., Milton Friedman, Friedrich A. Hayek, Joseph Wood Krutch, James C. Malin, William M. McGovern, Felix Morley, Helmut Schoeck, Richard M. Weaver, Roger J. Williams and Conway Zirkle. Foreword by Arthur Kemp. Hardcover $8.00.

LibertyPress LibertyClassics

We pay postage on prepaid orders.
To order these books, or for a copy of our catalog, write:
LibertyPress/LibertyClassics
7440 North Shadeland, Dept. 134
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the claims to undemonstrable truth and the appeals to ineffable principle which had for a generation divided the North and the South and which had, finally, lent a high-minded ferocity to the actual conduct of the war. Pragmatism is the philosophy of a historical moment that had had its bloody fill of principled fanaticisms. "I concluded that it was better to make a rule for the case at hand," the historian David Donald has quoted Lincoln, "than to decide the general question." There speaks the pragmatic temper.

THE Harvard philosophy department was the creation of the astonishingly durable Charles William Eliot, president of Harvard from 1869 to 1909, the "Golden Age" of Harvard philosophy. Under Eliot, Harvard went from a sedate school with a faculty of twenty-seven and an endowment of a gentlemanly $2 million to a modern full-scale university with a staff of seven hundred and a treasury of some $20 million. The tenfold increase in Harvard's endowment under his stewardship argues Eliot's skill at raising money; Mr. Kuklick (a professor of history at the University of Pennsylvania) points out that he had more than modest talent for saving it as well. One of Eliot's favorite schemes was to keep his faculty in the lower-paying grades until the precise moment when he had either to promote them or lose them to other universities. William James, for example, had to wave the red flag of Johns Hopkins to get his first promotion from Eliot; George Herbert Palmer had to produce an offer from Berkeley to get his professorship; and Santayana had to serve eighteen years as an instructor and assistant professor before getting his.

But Eliot had gifts other than those of the Yankee trader: he had, for one thing, an undeniable eye for quality. Although deaf to James's pleas to hire the dubious Charles Peirce, he said yes to Josiah Royce and to Hugo Münsterberg, a German psychologist and philosopher who with James, Royce, and Palmer filled out the great department; and he managed at any rate to tolerate a man in every way as unlike himself as the cosmopolitan Santayana.

Eliot's real distinction, however, was to have stood uncompromisingly for intellectual freedom at a time when that principle was not a musty piety: he was the first president of his institution, and one of the few college presidents of his day, to allow his faculty to explore ideas which deviated from Protestant orthodoxy. That in the event the Harvard philosophers were stout champions of religion in the face of the post-Darwinian challenge to all spiritual conviction does not affect the issue: Eliot let them rove where they would, he gave them the backing of a great institution, and he provided them with a platform from which they could be heard.

Eliot's successor, A. Lawrence Lowell, was another matter entirely. Eliot seemed to have had the idea that institutions were not ends in themselves; they existed to support the socially significant work of creative men. Lowell, on the other hand, said on his nomination in 1909 that institutions were "greater than men"; and his regime was characterized by the promiscuous application of that principle. Apropos this speech of Lowell's, Mr. Kuklick offers the following quotation from William James's *Letters*:

> We "intellectuals" in America must all work to keep our precious birthright of individualism and freedom from these institutions. *Every* great institution is perforce a means of corruption—whatever good it may also do.

Aside from its good sense, this letter of James's is noteworthy in two respects. It marks one of the first known uses of "intellectual" (hence James's quotation marks) in America. More to the point, James was referring specifically to the craven role the Catholic Church and the French Army were at that time—1899—playing in the Dreyfus affair; and this is not without a parabolic relation to A. Lawrence Lowell and Harvard.

HARVARD philosophy during the Lowell years became more and more technical and recondite—farther and farther removed from the "public philosophy" of James and Royce. Lowell wanted his faculty to be professionally competent: the work of Ralph Perry and Ernest Hocking, by Mr. Kuklick's account, was certainly that, and the work of C. I. Lewis and Alfred North Whitehead was a good deal more than that. But what Lowell prized most of all was Harvard, and he took special pains to keep its good name from being sullied by men of questionable character or from being embarrassed by the wrong sort of student. Thus, he refused to hire Bertrand Russell on moral grounds; and he repeatedly turned down the philosophy department's request to hire Arthur Lovejoy because of Lovejoy's role in the founding of the American Association of University Professors. With Harry Sheffer, a logician of apparently seminal intelligence, Lowell took a different tack: Sheffer had to eke out a living as a lecturer for ten years (from 1917 to 1927) before getting his first promotion, and wait another eleven before, at fifty-four, becoming a full professor. Sheffer was a "sensitive Jew."

It was Lowell who, in the 1920's, began the quota system for the minority groups who had since Eliot's day swollen the population, principally the Irish and the Jews. Lowell saw it as Harvard's special mission to polish these raw new Americans: Harvard would do its part for the country by producing what he (no doubt with good intentions) called the "pure American Jew." But Harvard had to be careful. It could not admit more of the minority-group members than it could transform with its airs and graces; if there were too many, the influence of Harvard would not tell. Hence the quota system.

According to Mr. Kuklick, there was no discrimination in the selection of graduate students, at least up until the mid-20's. But by then, the Harvard philosophers—men now of the "second department," the great figures having died or otherwise departed—had come to share Lowell's vision of Harvard's civilizing mission. In their letters to prospective employers of their Jewish graduate students, one senses a note of institutional anxiety—they seem constrained to separate

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Harvard from the students' sullying background. "I believe two of his grandparents were Jewish," one philosopher reassured a prospective employer, "but his other two grandparents were not. In all that counts, he is distinctly not Jewish." Another philosopher admitted that a candidate was of "Jewish extraction" but had, he was happy to report, "none of the faults which are sometimes expected in such cases." There are more examples, equally revealing.

IT IS of course a moral and intellectual error to judge past generations by standards that have become widely acknowledged only in one's own day. Still, these are the letters of philosophers, and we expect philosophers, if they are authentic seekers of wisdom, to transcend the lowest moral limits of their time. But nothing in Mr. Kuklick's history is sadder than these letters, for nothing so reveals the degree to which the Harvard philosophers, in identifying with their institution, had lost the way to wisdom.

Soviet Jews—In Israel & the West

FAREWELL, ISRAEL! By EPHRAIM SEVELA. *Gateway Editions. 295 pp. $12.95.*

Reviewed by JOSHUA RUBENSTEIN

EPHRAIM SEVELA was once a noted Jewish activist in the Soviet Union; on February 24, 1971, he helped to organize a hunger strike by twenty-four Jews in the reception room of the Supreme Soviet in order to secure visas for Israel. Within months, almost all of the participants, and thousands of others, were on their way to the West. Once in Jerusalem, Sevela resumed his career as a writer. His collection of bittersweet tales of Jewish life in Lithuania, *Legends from Invalid Street*, appeared in English three years ago; a novel, *Truth Is for Strangers*, was published in this country in 1976.

Sevela's personal history of devotion to Russian Jewry makes it all the more necessary to understand the complex emotions behind his latest and disturbingly malicious book, written after his embittered departure from Israel. *Farewell, Israel!* is neither fiction nor a memoir, nor a series of personal reflections. Surprisingly, Sevela tells us little about his own experiences in Israel, how he and his family lived, or whether his wife shares his disappointment with life there. Instead, he uses anecdotes and arguments of his own devising to persuade the reader that Soviet Jewry has seriously misjudged the reality of life in Israel; the fact that such a misjudgment could have occurred is for him an index of the entire corruption of the Jewish national enterprise.

Sevela's book is full of gross exaggerations, inaccuracies, and tendentious argument. At its core, however, is a truth: some Soviet Jews *are* disenchanted with Israel. For some, the encounter with Israel has been confusing and disheartening, perhaps even more so than it was for the pioneers who ventured to Palestine in the early part of this century, only to return to Europe and America when their dreams of settlement were overwhelmed by the heat and dust and hardship of the life they found. Living in Israel has never been easy for any group of immigrants, as the numbers of those who leave, including, of course, *sabras* themselves, testify. In addition, however, many Soviet Jews come to Israel with unique disadvantages. They know little about the country, its economic and political system, its language, its culture. On the other hand—and what may be even worse—several aspects of Israeli life may seem all too familiar to them—notably the en-

JOSHUA RUBENSTEIN *has written on Soviet affairs in* COMMENTARY, *the* New Republic, *and other periodicals. He is a field organizer for Amnesty International USA.*

"Well done and long needed"
—COMMENTARY

The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire
From the First Century A.D. to the Third

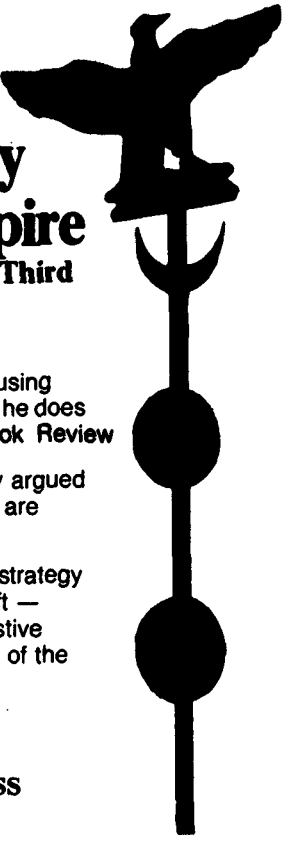
by EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

"[The author] seems entirely concerned with using modern ideas to illuminate ancient events. And he does an absorbing job." —The New York Times Book Review

"A fascinating book, well written and forcefully argued . . . His formulations are as refreshing as they are convincing." —The New Republic

"A wide-ranging historical analysis of Roman strategy and the changing patterns of Roman statecraft — including both intriguing analogies and suggestive contrasts to the evolving international position of the United States." —James R. Schlesinger

$12.95



THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY PRESS
Baltimore, Maryland 21218

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trenched bureaucracy and, until recently, a dominant political party calling itself "socialist."

Sevela provides a useful picture of the illusions about Israel which he and his colleagues had cultivated while still in the Soviet Union. "We Russian Jews invented an Israel of our own," he declares, "it became the embodiment of those expectations which had remained unfulfilled in the USSR." As Sevela recalls, the movement among Soviet Jews for emigration to Israel was "born as a protest against, and rejection of, Soviet life." It was not primarily a longing to live freely as Jews that drove most to emigrate, he asserts, but rather a desire to escape the restrictions they faced as Jews, over and above the general interdictions of Soviet life.

Regrettably, some Western Jews, as well as the Israeli government, have misunderstood the motivations of their Soviet brethren, particularly the professionals among them, and mistakes have been made in absorbing them into their new societies. Coming from a place where a profession provides the whole basis for spiritual satisfaction in life, Russian Jews do not understand the mobility of careers in the West or the fact that a job need not last a lifetime. Often they have difficulties finding employment that corresponds to their original training and sometimes, too, they are assigned by unthinking bureaucrats to positions that hardly match their qualifications. Furthermore, many Soviet immigrants, including Sevela, continue to reflect the idiosyncrasies and obsessions that characterize life in the Soviet Union: a complete dependence on the government for medical, educational, and vocational opportunities, a mistrust of the disorderliness of Western political life, and a lack of tolerance for those whose ideas and cultural (or religious) behavior conflict with conventional standards.

SEVELA, however, goes beyond the acknowledged difficulties of adjusting to life in the West in general, and in Israel in particular, to make extravagant claims against the Jewish state, which he indicts for complete anarchy and corruption. "Nowhere," he says, "does there exist such a propitious atmosphere for swindling as here." The proliferation of political parties, the reliance on donations from abroad, the high rate of automobile accidents—all are evidence of the fatal shortcomings of Israeli democracy. Israel, far from being "a regenerating ferment for the Jewish nation," is in fact "a catalyst hastening the process of its disintegration." Even the Sephardic communities who left Arab lands in the early 1950's would have been better off staying in Iraq or Syria. "Israel is doomed," he concludes, "and is unlikely to survive a decade."

At one point in his heated indictment, Sevela goes so far as to claim that

> For many years Israel has been ruled, not by a government made up of one particular party but by a handful of people in Tel Aviv, hidden carefully away from prying eyes, the all-powerful syndicate GUSH. The members of this group deal the cards from the political pack, appointing and dismissing ministers with an iron hand, manipulating the "democratic voting" in parliament.

Such fanciful claims recall the accusations that used to emanate from the Soviet Union under Stalin that a mysterious Zionist organization named Joint was conspiring with the imperialists to overthrow Communism. In fact, Sevela's style of argumentation seems to have been borrowed wholesale from *Pravda*, replete with embroidered anecdotes, bombastic rhetoric, and the demagogic self-righteousness of one who believes himself to be in sole possession of the Truth.

IT IS hard to know exactly what has so embittered Sevela. Although his book denounces Israel, it also expresses contempt for the Soviet Union and great sadness for the Jewish people who are "loved by none." It should not come as a surprise that Soviet citizens find life in Israel, or anywhere else in the West, overwhelmingly confusing. Their story needs to be told. But as Sevela's book more than adequately demonstrates, they themselves may be the least equipped to tell it.

Unions & Quotas

BLACK WORKERS IN WHITE UNIONS: JOB DISCRIMINATION IN THE UNITED STATES. By WILLIAM B. GOULD. *Cornell University Press. 506 pp. $20.00.*

Reviewed by ARCH PUDDINGTON

THE debate over preferential treatment for minority groups, an issue demonstrably capable of arousing strong passions in Americans, has intensified with the furor generated by the Bakke case. But as William B. Gould reminds us, it was the federal government's effort to increase the number of blacks in construction unions, and not university admissions policies, which touched off the first serious controversy over the imposition of quota systems as a means of rectifying discrimination. Outside the labor movement itself, few voices were raised in protest when, in 1969, the Nixon administration ordered six skilled crafts in Philadelphia to hire specified percentages of minority workers on projects financed with federal money. Later, of course, many of the academics who expressed smug approval when ratio-hiring formulas were applied to construction unions began to voice strong misgivings, and in some cases outright alarm, when the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare demanded that universities adhere to goals and timetables in order to increase the percentages of women and blacks on their faculties.

There was, and to a great extent still is, a conviction among liberal intellectuals that organized labor poses a major obstacle to racial change. Gould, a professor of law at Stanford University, shares this conviction: he asserts that the "hostility of the unions [has] made the problems of racial discrimination seem more intractable today than they once appeared to be." Gould acknowledges, albeit grudgingly, that the leadership of the American labor movement made a positive

ARCH PUDDINGTON, *a new contributor, is editor of* New America *and executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

contribution by supporting civil-rights laws and pushing for the adoption of social-welfare legislation designed to make housing, medical care, and other essential services more accessible to the poor. Having gotten this out of the way, Gould spends the rest of his time indicting the labor movement for resisting sweeping changes in seniority systems, apprenticeship-training programs, and those other institutions which help determine who is hired, promoted, and laid off. "The unsympathetic attitude of the labor movement," Gould says, ". . . has prevented the adoption of substantial remedies which might compensate blacks and consequently jostle whites who might otherwise be the first to benefit from opportunities made available to the minority group."

The remedy preferred by Gould is quotas. Gould faults voluntary hiring programs, changes in testing and interview procedures to insure that they function in a racially neutral way, tutoring, and other classic affirmative-action techniques that do not require ethnic ratios. They are, he asserts, insufficiently effective in breaking down the "institutional" barriers which stand in the way of full black participation in the economy. Quotas, on the other hand, "may simply be a more straightforward and simple means of balancing black and white economic interests." Gould believes, moreover, that quota hiring should be employed throughout the work force, not simply in those industries with documented histories of racial bias. Thus, even those public agencies having no records of discrimination should adopt quota formulas because of "the need of the community to be served by all the races."

Not surprisingly, Gould's sharpest criticism is directed at the building trades. He insists that "despite the multitudes of plans and programs, not a great deal has been done to alter the institutional rigidity which limits blacks' access to construction jobs." The courts, Gould notes, have handed down numerous decrees mandating goals and timetables, the modification of apprenticeship practices, and a variety of other measures intended to accelerate the entry of blacks into the skilled trades. In Gould's view, however, the judges have not gone far enough to produce equality of results in building-trades recruitment; he proposes the intervention of the judiciary at practically every stage of the hiring, training, and job-assignment levels.

THE fact that blacks are not represented in the construction trades in proportion to their presence in the workforce is ascribed by Gould almost solely to the bigotry and intransigence of the unions. One would hardly know from reading this book that the past seven years have been marked by global economic instability, that those industries which have traditionally provided employment opportunities for blacks—steel, textiles, and electronics are prominent examples—have significantly retrenched their domestic production in the face of mounting foreign competition, or that the construction industry has experienced unemployment rates approaching 20 per cent nationally, and even higher unemployment percentages in urban areas containing heavy concentrations of black workers.

To devote any but the most cursory attention to the broader social and economic causes of black unemployment would, of course, have detracted from Gould's thesis that union racism is the principal cause of the divisions between black and white Amercans. Furthermore, if Gould had given serious consideration to the underlying causes of joblessness, he would have discovered major flaws in another idea that is central to his argument: that the courts are the most potent instrument for the economic advancement of minorities.

In rebuttal to President Eisenhower's assertion that laws cannot change the hearts of men, Gould argues that the civil-rights decisions handed down by the Warren Court "changed the tone of American life as it relates to race relations." Unfortunately, much the same can be said of more recent judicial decrees sanctioning quotas and other preferential systems. Americans may be even more race-conscious today than they were during the protest

NOVELS
by J. Inchardi
$10 each.

Lines On The Death Of A Fisherman
Three Jews In A Tub
Dreamship
Yurros
A Paper Toy
Intercurse

Order by mail from
Sirius Books, Box 177
Freeport, Maine 04032

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE
Please include a COMMENTARY address label to insure prompt service whenever you write us about your subscription.
MAIL TO: COMMENTARY
165 East 56th St., New York, N.Y. 10022

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
If you're moving, please let us know five weeks before changing your address. Place magazine address label here, print your new address below. If you have a question about your subscription, place your magazine address label here and clip this form to your letter.

ATTACH LABEL HERE

name
address
city
state zip code

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

era, but it is doubtful that this heightened awareness is moving us toward the goal of a more equal society. Increasingly, most Americans perceive the principal objective of blacks to be institutionalized systems of preferential treatment, and this perception is eroding their support for civil-rights goals in general and calling into question the confidence they feel they can place in the abilities of black workers.

Gould is not entirely unaware of these problems. He takes note that Richard Nixon "was able to win a resounding victory in 1972 by rallying those who were a rung above the black worker and by appealing to their belief that blacks were attempting to get something for nothing and to destroy the individual work ethic." But Gould treats as irrelevant the fact that the quota issue contributed to the political defeat of George McGovern, the black-supported candidate, and (most civil-rights leaders believe) to the subsequent economic setback suffered by black workers. Incredibly, Gould bases himself on judicial decisions only, without bothering to offer a political argument or to meet political objections to his position. As far as Gould is concerned, any judicial finding that vaguely conforms to his own values is sufficient to rule out any other considerations—social, economic, or political.

Gould's obsession with the benefits of judicial intervention is not merely an error of strategy; it suggests an irresponsible desire to punish a labor movement for which the author has little use and in which, he believes, white workers have won extensive privileges at the expense of blacks. Otherwise, why would Gould offer nothing but patronizing dismissal of the several "outreach" programs that pursue integration in the construction unions by means of non-quota techniques? (These programs, incidentally, were initiated by the original proponents of affirmative action long before that concept came to be equated with ratios and quotas.) The outreach programs—two of the more successful of which are sponsored by the National Urban League and the Recruitment and Training Program—have as their goal to increase the ready supply of qualified minority-group workers. They recruit inner-city youths, tutor them both in basic skills and in specific areas relevant to construction work, help them purchase tools, oversee apprenticeship tests to insure that they are administered fairly, and attempt to obtain equitable treatment for program graduates once they become apprentices. Moreover, the sponsoring agencies have on occasion gone to court, or supported court suits, against recalcitrant union locals and have sought changes in testing and apprenticeship requirements.

Gould has obviously not taken the time to investigate the effectiveness of these programs, which he criticizes for playing "by the rules of the game." He reasons that since these outreach programs have won the support of the AFL-CIO and since they do not seek the wholesale transformation of union rules and standards, they must therefore be compromising the rights of black workers. The facts reveal something else entirely. Minority-group workers have comprised close to 20 per cent of building-trades apprentices for about the last five years, a dramatic increase from the pathetic figures even of the mid-1960's, and most manpower experts credit the outreach programs with much of this progress. Moreover, the workers placed by the programs have been far more likely to graduate to journeyman's status than have other workers, black or white.

GOULD is but one of a growing number of scholars who have concluded that the court system is far superior to the legislative process in its ability to turn the civil-rights movement's dream of a racially equal society into a reality. If such scholars might have once denied that quotas existed where in fact they clearly did exist, today they are forthright in proposing that certain groups be given a special, favored classification before the law. Perhaps the most deplorable aspect of the new philosophy of equality through legal activism is the unwillingness of its champions to consider seriously the consequences of their ideas in the face of overpowering evidence that the impact is negative both on society in general and on minority groups in particular.

Gould, for example, ridicules the notion that the institutionalization of racial preference will encourage whites to try to "pass" as black in order to gain the benefits bestowed on the minority group. Ironically, there have recently been incidents in New York and Los Angeles in which teachers—both black and white—have classified themselves racially as what they were not in order to avoid being shuffled around the city in fulfillment of assignment quotas. Los Angeles has already established "ethnic review committees" for the sole purpose of determining the validity of the teachers' self-classification. Thus, whatever Gould and others like him may claim, the truth may well turn out to be that quotas are not only unfair, they are also not terribly effective.

The Arab Boycott

THE ECONOMIC WAR AGAINST THE JEWS. By WALTER HENRY NELSON and TERENCE PRITTIE. *Random House. 269 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY MARSH

ONE of the most striking manifestations of Arab hostility to Israel is the economic boycott administered by the Arab League, which seeks to isolate the Jewish state from normal commercial intercourse with the rest of the world. It is not uncommon for states to restrict their trade with others they consider hostile—the U.S. has done this for many years, in varying degrees of severity, with members of the Communist bloc. But the Arab boycott is much wider than other boycotts and embargoes; its extent would be unusual even between countries in a state of shooting war with each other. Not only do the Arab nations refuse to do any business with Israel itself, but they refuse to maintain commercial relations with any company anywhere which also does business with Israel (a secondary boycott), and they

JEFFREY MARSH *is a consultant on energy economics.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

even go so far as to forbid companies wishing Arab trade to do business with any other companies that in turn trade with Israel (a tertiary boycott).

This theoretical structure of institutionalized hostility is, of course, impossible to enforce fully in a world characterized by a multitude of international commercial linkages continually increasing in both number and complexity. Indeed, without a substantial degree of voluntary cooperation on the part of world business in general, the boycott would prove largely unworkable, at least without inflicting an unacceptable amount of economic damage on the Arab states themselves. The fact is, however, that voluntary cooperation is widespread, and although the boycott is not as successful as it theoretically could be, it is infinitely more successful than it should be.

In *The Economic War Against the Jews*, Walter Henry Nelson and Terence Prittie explore the theory and practice of the Arab boycott, and trace its history and effects on companies and nations seeking Arab trade. Unfortunately, while the book attempts to deal with all of the major topics relevant to the boycott, the treatment is somewhat lacking in depth, and much of the book reads like an undigested mass of newspaper clippings and extracts from the copious files on the boycott kept by the American Jewish Committee and the Anti-Defamation League. Little attempt has been made to approach this mass of material systematically, or to classify the ways the Arab Boycott Office deals with companies whose compliance with boycott requests deviates from the expected norm. Fortunately, the illustrative examples are sufficient in number for the reader to draw his own conclusions on fundamental matters.

THE economic boycott as an Arab weapon against Jewish settlement predates the establishment of the state of Israel. As long ago as the 1920's there were organized attempts to prevent Arab residents of Palestine from patronizing Jewish businesses. Nelson and Prittie quote one slogan of 1929 (from the

New Paperbacks

The Psychology of Sex Differences
Volume I: Text; Volume II: Annotated Bibliography

Eleanor Emmons Maccoby & Carol Nagy Jacklin. "A model of what a good review of the literature should be. . . . Richly spiced with the authors' own conclusions and hypotheses."—*American Journal of Psychology.* Cloth, combining Volumes I and II, $18.95; paper, Volume I: Text, $6.95; paper, Volume II: Annotated Bibliography, $4.95

Learning in Infants and Young Children

Michael Howe. "A masterful summary of current research finds and controversies. . . . There can be no student of psychology, education, or related disciplines who could not benefit from it."—*Psychology Today.* Cloth, $8.95; paper, $4.95

The Positive Hero in Russian Literature

SECOND EDITION. *Rufus W. Mathewson, Jr.* "The ease with which Professor Mathewson can now integrate a new section on [Pasternak, Solzhenitsyn, and Sinyavsky] with his earlier text illustrates how well he has grasped the inner strains and stresses of Soviet Russian culture." —*Times Literary Supplement.* Cloth, $14.95; paper, $6.95

Society and Culture in Early Modern France

EIGHT ESSAYS BY NATALIE ZEMON DAVIS. "Every one of these essays is the kind of model study which reminds us how revealing and exciting history can be when a love of reconstructing the details of past societies is wedded to the search for larger patterns of significance."—*Journal of Modern History.* Cloth, $15.00; paper, $5.95

New in cloth and paper

China to 1850: A Short History

Charles O. Hucker. Written in the same lively style as the author's classic *China's Imperial Past*, this is a distillation of what every general reader or beginning student should know about the history of traditional Chinese civilization. Illus. Cloth, $10.00; paper, $2.95

Women in Chinese Society

Edited by Margery Wolf & Roxane Witke. "An outstanding contribution to our understanding of Chinese society. The historians and anthropologists who participated help to destroy many stereotypes we have about Chinese women."—*Choice.* Cloth, $12.50; paper, $5.95

Japan: A Short Cultural History

G. B. Sansom. "When [this book] appeared in 1931, it raised the study of Japanese history in the West to new levels."—*Journal of the American Oriental Society* [1959] "Still the best introduction to Japanese history."—*Times Literary Supplement* [1973]. Illus. Cloth, $18.75; paper, $7.50

Women in Changing Japan

Edited by Joyce Lebra, Joy Paulson & Elizabeth Powers. "All of the authors are scholars and all bring to their work a rigorous discipline and a precise documentation. . . . A sober and illuminating book . . . extremely rich in detail."—*The Japan Times.* Paper, $5.95

Now in a hardbound text edition

China's Imperial Past

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE HISTORY AND CULTURE. *Charles O. Hucker.* Illus. Cloth, $17.50; hardbound text, $10.95

Stanford University Press

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

First Palestinian Women's Congress, no less): "To buy nothing from the Jews but land, and to sell them everything but land." The formal boycott of Israel came about as a continuation of this policy of unremitting hostility and refusal to admit the legitimacy of a Jewish state, even after the failure of the Arabs' attempt to destroy Israel at birth.

In the 1950's and 1960's, the boycott was often met with scorn in the West, especially when the Arabs blacklisted popular entertainers (Frank Sinatra, Elizabeth Taylor) or movies (Walt Disney's *Snow White*, because a cartoon horse bore the name "Samson") that were regarded as unduly favorable to Israel. Periodically, a minor scandal would erupt when public attention was drawn to the efforts of companies to extricate themselves from inconvenient Israeli connections, as in the Norwich Union case of 1963, when one of England's leading insurance companies requested the resignation from its board of directors of Lord Mancroft, a prominent Jewish businessman whose major offense apparently was that he served on another board together with the well-known British Zionist leader, Sir Isaac Wolfson. Yet even in those years, the boycott was far from ineffective. Major corporations (such as the Ford Motor Company) that refused to close down their Israeli operations were forbidden from setting up new operations in the Arab world or saw their existing operations expelled.

Still, it was only in the aftermath of the Yom Kippur War of 1973, when Arab economic power began to assume a commanding position on the world scene and the major Western economies began to falter (the two phenomena were of course connected), that the importance of attracting Arab customers began to loom much larger in the eyes of business, both in the U.S. and abroad. In the years since then, fear of displeasing Arab customers has led to greater compliance with boycott-inspired practices, sometimes even in advance of actual Arab requests. One convenient way of demonstrating freedom from any taint of Zionist sympathies, for example, has been to remove Jewish employees from visible positions in the hierarchy. Thus, a number of American architectural firms, seeing in the booming Arab countries an apparent avenue of salvation from the depressed domestic construction market, have severely restricted the hiring and assignment of Jews.

Not only have companies in the U.S. and Europe voluntarily adopted practices even beyond those demanded by the Boycott Office, they have vociferously objected to proposed legislation which, by outlawing participation in secondary and tertiary boycott practices, would provide them with a convenient alibi for noncompliance. In this eagerness to please their Arab customers they have been abetted by the executive branches of the various governments involved, which have consistently sought to water down anti-boycott regulations on the grounds that governments should not interfere in free customer-client relationships (even though this principle would not seem to apply when one of the parties involved is the government of a foreign country); or on the grounds that other countries, not so principled, might capture the Arab trade; or on the grounds that a strong anti-boycott stand would disturb Arab governments to the point where they would retaliate by jeopardizing Arab-Israeli peace negotiations.

That the actual degree of compliance with the boycott has been above and beyond the call of duty is demonstrated by the fact that the Arabs themselves simply ignore the boycott when they are really interested in doing business. Thus, Saudi Arabia happily seeks to buy missiles from the same Raytheon Corporation which supplies similar weapons to Israel. The Hilton hotel chain, an unabashed foe of the boycott, is able to operate hotels in Cairo, Kuwait, Abu Dhabi, Bahrein, Khartoum—and in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

In other cases, companies unwilling to defy the boycott openly can still find means to do business with Israel indirectly, and need not concern themselves unduly that the Boycott Office will devote even the minimal effort necessary to establish the real state of affairs. The truth is that the administration of the boycott is extremely haphazard: there is no definitive list of exactly how many and which companies are blacklisted, and those partial lists which are released periodically tend to be curiously constructed and full of ludicrous errors and misprints obvious to the casual but literate reader. It is possible that this is deliberate, reflecting a calculated recognition that uncertainty breeds fear, but it may also be simply a matter of incompetence.

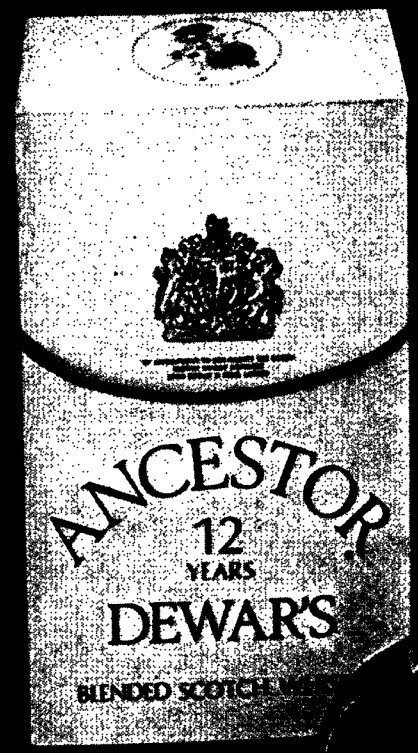
Nelson and Prittie are impressed by the progress which has been made in France, the U.S., and Britain, where some anti-boycott legislation has been introduced. They conclude their book with the proposal that an international legislative consensus be reached that would enable companies to reject boycott pressures without fear of losing business to others observing the boycott.

This, however, is hardly a likely prospect. Unlike a case such as that of Rhodesia, where international lip service is paid to a virtually universal embargo at the same time that widespread clandestine trade goes on, those who publicly deplore the boycott of Israel are seldom moved to more than token efforts to oppose its practice. In fact, even those best disposed toward Israel often are unwilling to take its part aggressively: not one country in the world would condemn even the blatant aggression of the Arabs in the Yom Kippur War.

Nelson and Prittie devote considerable space to a discussion of anti-Jewish attitudes in Islam, and this helps illuminate the historic wellsprings of the primary boycott against Israel. To understand fully the success of the secondary and tertiary boycotts, however, one would have to explore as well the history of Christian-Jewish relations, with special attention to that peculiarly Christian form of resentment toward Jewish self-assertion which the Arabs have been able tacitly to count on in their economic war against the Jews.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

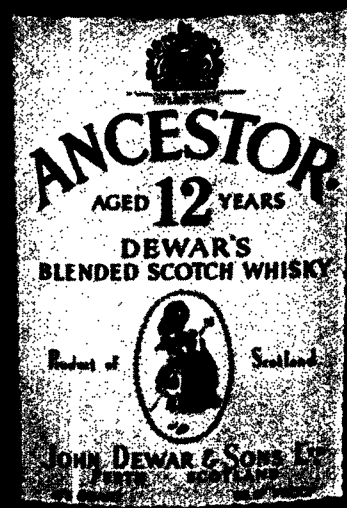
Dewar's has a rich Ancestor.®



You drink your 12-year-old Scotch for only one reason: it's a special taste in Scotch that you enjoy. But have you ever enjoyed Ancestor 12-year-old Scotch whisky?

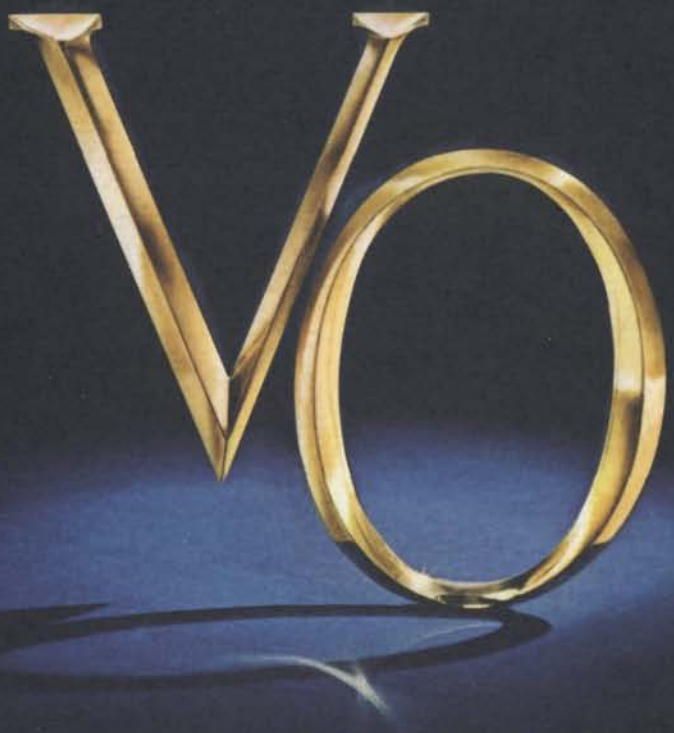
Ancestor is aged, blended, and bottled by John Dewar and Sons, makers of renowned Dewar's "White Label." Everything Dewar's has learned about making Scotch whisky for over 100 years goes into the blending of Ancestor. So it shouldn't surprise you if you find Ancestor a little smoother, a little richer than other 12-year-olds.

Discover a rich Ancestor.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The reputation built by word of mouth.



Seagram's V.O.

Bottled in Canada. Preferred throughout the world.

CANADIAN WHISKY. A BLEND OF CANADA'S FINEST WHISKIES. 6 YEARS OLD. 86.8 PROOF. SEAGRAM DISTILLERS CO., N.Y.C.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED